

**Line managers' engagement in support of employees'
development:**

A study within the Oil and Gas Industry

Antony Douglas Haigh

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Edinburgh Business School

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Abstract

Line managers who are involved with employees on a daily basis are in a unique position to support their subordinate employees' development. However, organisations have found that achieving the required engagement from line managers is not straightforward.

This particular study embraced a framework based on the Job Demands-Resources model to help understand what are the factors most influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. Through a mixed methodology approach, combining a questionnaire instrument and focus group discussions with line managers and other stakeholders within an organisation operating in the Oil and Gas industry, this study identified several findings that have implications on different levels.

The results of the study indicated that organisation factors were perceived by line managers as being more important than both opportunity factors and motivation factors and that organisation factors moderate the impact of the ability, opportunity and motivation factors. In addition, it was found that organisation factors can moderate individual/contextual variables and also that certain individual/contextual variables may moderate organisation, opportunity and motivation factors.

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this to my wife, Tzvetomira, for being patient and supportive, generous and compassionate. I could not have accomplished this study without you. Thanks for being my best friend – even when I was dissertating. I must be one of the luckiest people alive.

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I would like to first acknowledge my major supervisor, Dr Iain Henderson. He read my manuscript dozens of times, provided needed feedback on concepts and methods, and moved this study forward to completion. I feel fortunate to have come through the Edinburgh Business School program.

I would also like to mention the Chevron organisation for allowing me access to the required data.

Thanks.

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Research Thesis Submission

Name:	ANTONY DOUGLAS HAIGH		
School/PGI:	EDINBURGH BUSINESS SCHOOL		
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Table of Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
1	Introduction	1
2	Literature review	5
3	Literature synthesis, research question and objectives	73
4	Research methodology	84
5	Results	110
6	Conclusions, resources and interventions, limitations and suggestions for further research	171
Appendix A	Copy of the questionnaire used in the main study	195
Appendix B	Detailed results data	213
Appendix C	MANOVA results	311
Appendix D	Construct of the questionnaire instrument	312
	References	322

Chapter 1:
Introduction
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
1	Introduction	1

Chapter 2:
Literature Review
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
2.1	How the literature review was conducted	6
2.2	Skills shortage in the Oil and Gas industry	7
2.3	Building capability as a response	10
2.4	Who are line managers	11
2.5	The importance of line managers' support for subordinate employees' development	12
2.6	Roles and typologies of line managers supporting their employees' development	16
2.7	Line managers and workplace learning	20
2.8	How readily engaged are line managers in their role as employee developers	22
2.9	Factors influencing line manager engagement	24
2.10	An operating framework	29
2.11	The importance of context	32
2.12	Organisation factors	34
2.13	Task factors	41
2.14	Individual factors	61
2.15	Literature gaps	63

Chapter 3:
Literature Synthesis, research question and objectives
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
3.1	Literature synthesis and link to the research question	74
3.2	The research question	79
3.3	The research objectives	80
3.4	Additional research hypotheses	81
3.5	Research significance	83

Chapter 4:
Research methodology
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
4.1	Summary of the methodology	85
4.2	The research paradigm and theoretical framework	86
4.3	Method selection	90
4.4	Justification of methodological choice	91
4.5	Research ethics	95
4.6	Pilot study	96
4.7	Construct of the questionnaire instrument	101
4.8	Details of the questionnaire data collection process	102
4.9	Details of the focus group data collection process	106

Chapter 5:
Results
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
5.1	Outline	111
5.2	Statistical testing techniques	112
5.3	Results for study objective 1	114
5.4	Results for study objective 2	117
5.5	Results for study objective 3	139
5.6	Results summary	168

Chapter 6:
Conclusions, resources and interventions,
limitations and suggestions for further research
Contents

Chapter	Description	Page
6.1	Outline	172
6.2	Conclusions and discussion	173
6.3	Resources and interventions	179
6.4	Limitations of this study and suggestions for further research	192

List of tables

Table	Description	Page
2.1	Roles and responsibilities of line managers for supporting subordinate employees' development	16
2.2	Organisational values and a coaching context (Hunt & Weintraub, p.68, 2011)	35
2.3	Coaching skills summarised into a framework based on the Noer (2005) Triangle Coaching Model	46
2.4	Different types of motivation based on being regulated by controlled reasons and autonomous reasons	48
2.5	Comparison of previous researchers' assemblage of factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development	67
4.1	Consistency results for survey scales	105
4.2	Profiles of focus group participants	107
5.1	Results of One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests	118
5.2	Number of line manager questionnaire responses by group	140
5.3	Distribution of survey responses by role	143
5.4	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (line managers and other roles) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	144
5.5	Distribution of survey responses by gender	146
5.6	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (male line managers and female line managers) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	147
5.7	Distribution of survey responses by organisation type	149
5.8	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (project-based line	150

	managers and routine organisation-based line managers) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	
5.9	Distribution of survey responses by functional discipline	152
5.10	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (facilities engineering line managers and line managers from other functions) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	153
5.11	Distribution of survey responses by span of control	154
5.12	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (line managers supporting 1-3 employees and line managers supporting 4 or more employees) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	155
5.13	Distribution of survey responses by types of experience	156
5.14	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of Oil and Gas industry experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	157
5.15	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of Company experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	158
5.16	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of international experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	160
5.17	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of experience as a line manager) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	161
5.18	Distribution of survey responses by age	162
5.19	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers aged between 21 and 40 and line managers aged over 40) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	163
5.20	Distribution of survey responses by geographic origin	165

5.21	Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers from USA, Canada and line managers from other regions) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	166
5.22	Summary of results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups	170

List of figures

Figure	Description	Page
2.1	A 2013 survey of 170,000+ Oil and Gas professionals indicated that skill shortages are considered one of the biggest threats to the Oil and Gas industry (Oil Careers & Air Energi, 2013)	8
2.2	The Job Demands-Resources Model (Schaufeli & Bakker (2004); Hakanen et al (2008); Korunka et al (2009); Llorens et al (2007))	26
2.3	A conceptual model for Line Managers' HRM implementation effectiveness: integrating social factors and A-M-O factors (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2015)	29
2.4	An operating framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development	31
3.1	An operating framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development.	77
4.1	Number of questionnaire responses (by respondent category)	104
5.1	An overall view of the influence of organisation, opportunity and motivation factors – the perceptions of line managers	115
5.2	Line managers' perceptions of the importance of organisation, opportunity and motivation factors	116
5.3	The influence of motivation factors (autonomous regulation versus controlled regulation)	125
5.4	Overall perceptions of the most important ability factors (overall view)	131
5.5	Overall perceptions of the most important ability factors (detailed view)	133
6.1	A revised framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development	176

Glossary of terms

- **Engagement** refers to a state when one is more likely to invest time and energy and be psychologically involved in the work of their organisation.
- **The JD–R (Job Demands–Resources) model** is a theoretical framework that proposes that working conditions can be categorized into two broad categories – job demands and resources.
- **Job demands** represent any facets of a role that necessitate sustained effort to accommodate or withstand difficulties.
- **Job resources** can foster engagement as well as mitigate the adverse consequences of undue job demands.
- **Employee Development** refers to the steps taken within an organisation to facilitate improvement in skills, behaviours and abilities that are necessary for long-term personal effectiveness and contribute to the organisation's prospects of remaining competitive.
- A **line manager** is defined here as someone who directly manages other employees and is responsible for the administrative management of the individual as well as the functional management. These job responsibilities include directly supporting the development of a subordinate employee. A line manager may be a first level manager who supervises employees directly or a second level manager who manages line managers.
- An **employee** is defined here as someone in a non-managerial position and whose job responsibilities do not include directly supporting the development of other employees.
- **HRM (Human Resource Management)** is a strategic and comprehensive approach to managing people and the workplace culture and environment. Effective HRM enables employees to contribute effectively and productively to the overall company direction and the accomplishment of the organisation's goals and objectives.
- **HRM practices** refer to the organisational activities that support HRM.
- **Human Resource Development (HRD)** is the part of people management that deals with the process of facilitating, guiding and coordinating work-related learning and development to ensure that individuals, teams and organisations can perform as desired.

- **Contextual factors** are defined as situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organisational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables.
- **Organisational factors** refer to the organisational conditions fostering employee development, and include:
 - **Organisational culture** – whether or not the organisation is positive and supportive of line manager engagement in supporting development of employees,
 - **Leadership direction** – whether or not leadership is showing role model behaviours with regard to Employee Development,
 - **Value articulation** – whether or not line managers understand why the organisation values Employee Development and line manager support for Employee Development,
 - **Goal orientation** – whether or not the organisation sets an appropriate balance between short term imperatives versus long term business needs and between performance targets versus development objectives,
 - **Organisation type** – whether the organisation has a temporary structure (e.g. project based work) or a stable structure.
- **The A-M-O (Ability, Motivation and Opportunity) model** proposes that HRM practices contribute to improved employee performance by developing employees' abilities (A) and skills to do their job, improving an employee's motivation (M) for discretionary effort, and providing employees with the opportunity (O) to make full use of their skills and be motivated.
- **Ability** is defined here as being able to perform a particular task because of possession of the necessary skills and knowledge.
- The **Triangle Coaching Model** conceptualises the coaching process as the dynamic interaction of three behavioural dimensions: **assessing, challenging** and **supporting**. It was developed for training line managers in coaching and helping skills, and with the specific intention that it could be applied across cultures.
- **Motivation factors** refer to the line manager's desire and willingness to engage in supporting Employee Development activities, and include:

- **Accountability** – the extent to which the organisation makes line managers responsible and answerable,
- **Desire for competence** – the extent to which a line manager's confidence in his/her ability influences engagement in supporting Employee Development,
- **Intrinsic motivation** – line manager's motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself,
- **Need for autonomy** – line managers' perceptions of their freedom of choice. Line managers engage because they choose to do so, not because they feel pressured by other people or external factors. Line managers also need independence and discretion how the activity should be performed,
- **Need for purpose** – line managers' perceptions that supporting Employee Development is a meaningful activity and will make a difference,
- **Need for relatedness** – line managers' want to interact, be connected to, and experience caring for others,
- **Performance incentives** – how the organisation provides encouragement to line managers,
- **Return on investment** – line managers' perceptions that they will gain something by supporting Employee Development,
- **Social exchange** – a line manager's belief that the degree of support provided by the organisation to support his/her development sets a standard to be followed for supporting employees.
- **Opportunity** refers to the line manager having available the capacity, resources and avenues necessary to engage in supporting Employee Development activities, and include:
 - **Organisational support** – the aid made available by the organisation when it is needed to carry out one's job effectively and to deal with stressful situations,
 - **Guidance** – clear policies regarding the use of HRD policies and practices
 - **Effectiveness of HRD practices** – the suitability of the organisation's HRD practices to help manage Employee Development duties,
 - **Relationships with HRD** – the service level, trust level and knowledge level that HRD practitioners can be relied upon to provide in support and partnership of line manager's development activities,
 - **Role clarity** – clear policies regarding role expectations and the division of responsibilities and authority between various stakeholders,

- **Role conflict** – incongruity between operational and developmental role expectations, including the difference between expectations of employees compared with line managers,
 - **Pressure of short-term imperatives** – the difficulty of prioritizing immediate performance targets within competing demands,
 - **Workload** – of the amount of work that needs to be done, creating an exposure to demands that require more time, energy and commitment than one can provide,
 - **Span of control** – the number of employees whose development a line manager is responsible for supporting.
-
- **SDT (Self-determination theory)** holds that when people experience competence, relatedness and autonomy, they become self-determined and able to be intrinsically motivated to pursue the things that interest them.
 - **OST (Organisational support theory)** holds that in order to assess the benefits of increased work effort, employees form a general perception concerning the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Such **POS (perceived organisational support)** would increase employees' felt obligation to help the organisation reach its objectives, their affective commitment to the organisation, and their expectation that improved performance would be rewarded.
 - **LMX (Leader-member exchange theory)** assumes that managers develop an exchange with each of their subordinates, and that the quality of these leader-member exchange relationships influences subordinates' responsibility, decision influence, access to resources and performance.

Chapter 1:

Introduction

Employee Development is often cited as an appropriate approach to tackle skills shortages currently affecting many companies (Skillsoft, 2015), not least because a sustained competitive advantage can be achieved through developing human resources better and faster than competitors (Hatch & Dyer, 2004). This issue is particularly relevant at this time, since organisations are increasingly struggling to find the skills they need among the global talent pool according to the Aon Global Risk Management Survey (2015). It is a growing challenge worldwide, affecting industries from construction to finance, with jobseekers lacking the required skills, and those with the desired capabilities and experience facing increasing competition for their talents, putting pressure on wages and benefits. Employers aren't just whining – the “skills gap” is real (Harvard Business Review, 2014). A report by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (Employer Skills Survey 2015) has found that almost a quarter of job vacancies last year were caused by the widening skills crisis across the UK, while 14 per cent of employers report skills gaps in their existing workforce. This situation is exacerbated in the rich world, where organisations are confronted with a rapidly ageing workforce - dubbed the “silver tsunami”. Nearly one in three American workers are over 50, and America is a young country compared with Japan and Germany. China is also ageing rapidly (The Economist, 2010). Potential retirement demographics are more pressing for certain industries, such as Oil and Gas.

Line managers who are involved with employees on a daily basis are in a unique position to support their subordinates' development (Tansky & Cohen, 2001). The CIPD learning and development survey (2007) found that more than 90% of respondents believe that line managers are ‘important’ or ‘very important’ in supporting Employee Development in their organisations, but organisations have found that achieving the required engagement from line managers is not straightforward (Nehles et al, 2006).

Given this background, the purpose of this particular study was to investigate the factors that influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. Prior research has suggested that job demands and the

availability of job resources are important antecedents of work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job demands are the facets of a role that necessitate sustained effort to accommodate or withstand difficulties. Job resources, on the other hand, can foster engagement as well as mitigate the adverse consequences of undue job demands. For the purposes of this particular study it was suggested that job demands could be represented by organisation factors including culture and structure, and also by task factors comprising three interrelated mechanisms: ability (A), motivation (M) and opportunity (O). Other research has also contended that contextual and individual demographic variables influence people in choosing what challenges to undertake and how much effort to expend in the endeavour (Lepine & Crawford, 2010).

Related to this, the literature review highlighted several uncultivated areas of particular relevance to this particular study, including:

- A need to understand the organisation, task and individual factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development (e.g. Anderson, 2013),
- A need to examine the potentially moderating effects of organisation factors that may impact line managers' ability/motivation/opportunity to be supportive of subordinate employees' development (e.g. Bos-Nehles et al, 2013),
- A need to examine the implications for both organisations and line managers of Employee Development dynamics in project-oriented companies (e.g. Bredin & Söderlund, 2007),
- A need to derive a clearer understanding of how to intervene to improve engagement at the level of the individual, the team, the business unit, and the organisation (e.g. Bakker et al, 2011), and
- A need to obtain data from different perspectives to examine whether or not there is a variation in the perceptions regarding line managers' participation in Employee Development activities (e.g. Margaryan et al, 2013).

This context, set out above, led to the formulation of the research question for this particular study: what are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors that most influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development and to what extent are these factors mediated by

demographic and contextual factors? In addition, how can an organisation intervene in the management of these factors in order to increase line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development?

This particular study was based on an exploratory and explanatory case study approach, using a quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (focus group interviews) data assembling instruments. According to Kitzinger (1995) questionnaires are more appropriate for obtaining quantitative information and explaining how many people hold a certain opinion; focus groups are better for exploring exactly how those opinions are constructed. Wolff et al (1993) demonstrated how incorporating a qualitative approach, represented by the focus group method, into an integrated research design with a major sample survey component can enhance the quality of the resulting analysis and the confidence that can be placed in it. The case study was conducted within an organisation conducting business in the Oil and Gas industry, where the issue of skill shortages is particularly pressing at this time.

The results of the study indicated that organisation factors were perceived by line managers as being more important than both opportunity factors and motivation factors and that organisation factors moderate the impact of the ability, opportunity and motivation factors. It was also found that organisation factors can moderate individual/contextual variables and also that certain individual/contextual variables may moderate organisation, opportunity and motivation factors.

A number of studies (e.g. Sambrook (2005), Sikora & Ferris (2011), Bos-Nehles et al (2013)) have concentrated on the issues that impact line managers' fulfilment of the HR responsibilities devolved to them. The majority of these studies looked at whether such factors as organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity could predict line managers' HR practice implementation levels. This particular study embraced a slightly different focus and started from the premise that previously reported inconsistencies in line managers' performance in supporting subordinate employees' development were due to their level of engagement in the task. For that reason, an operating framework based on the Job Demands-Resources model was adopted to help understand what are the organisational, ability, motivation and opportunity factors most influencing line managers' engagement in support

of subordinate employees' development, to ascertain the extent to which demographic and contextual factors also exert an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development and to investigate which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives.

In focusing on the factors that promote managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, the study was intended add to the growing knowledge of factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, including examining which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours. Additionally, it should provide a basis for businesses improving their performance by properly aligning engagement intervention levers relating to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. However, perhaps the most original contribution is that it helps to identify the extent to which contextual and individual factors moderate the influence of organisation and task factors.

Chapter 2:

Literature review

2.1 How the literature review was conducted

The purpose of conducting this literature review was to examine what is already known about the subject of line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development and to build a rationale for additional research.

The literature review involved a search for answers to these questions:

- What is known about this subject?
- Is there a consensus on relevant issues? Or is there significant debate on issues? What are the various positions?
- Are there any gaps in the knowledge of this subject? Which openings for research have been identified by other researchers? How can gaps be bridged by the current study?

On this basis, the relevant literature was examined through a staged review, in which an initial appraisal of abstracts was followed by a full in-depth examination of those articles that covered the topic area.

2.2 Skills Shortage in the Oil and Gas industry

Employers are increasingly struggling to find the skills they need among the global talent pool according to the Aon Global Risk Management Survey (2015). It is a growing challenge worldwide, affecting industries from construction to finance, with jobseekers lacking the required skills, and those with the desired capabilities and experience facing increasing competition for their talents, putting pressure on wages and benefits. Employers aren't just whining – the “skills gap” is real (Harvard Business Review, 2014). A report by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (Employer Skills Survey 2015) has found that almost a quarter of job vacancies last year were caused by the widening skills crisis across the UK, while 14 per cent of employers report skills gaps in their existing workforce. This situation is exacerbated in the rich world, where organisations are confronted with a rapidly ageing workforce - dubbed the “silver tsunami”. Nearly one in three American workers are over 50, and America is a young country compared with Japan and Germany. China is also ageing rapidly (The Economist, 2010).

Potential retirement demographics are more pressing for certain industries, such as Oil and Gas. Oil field workers are retiring in huge numbers, leaving a workforce that's younger and — more importantly — less experienced. According to the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact Commission (2014), the average age of industry employees is between 46 and 49. Although it may appear like they still have a few more years of solid work ahead, the average age for retirement in the industry is 55, not 65 as in other industries. If companies do not figure out how to transfer knowledge from soon-to-be-retiring employees to younger generations of workers, decades of industry wisdom and expertise will be lost forever over the next five to seven years (FMI, 2013).

This shortage of key engineering and technology skills is frequently cited as one of the biggest challenges facing the industry. Skill shortages can lead to production delays for projects increasing costs for the industry and leading to more risk taking, as well as the risk that future innovation and progress may not be realised (Camps, 2015).

The biggest threats to the oil and gas industry

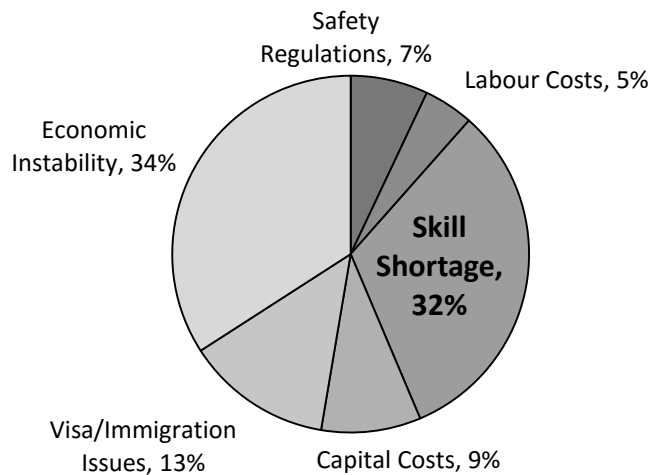


Figure 2.1: A 2013 survey of 170,000+ Oil and Gas professionals indicated that skill shortages are considered one of the biggest threats to the Oil and Gas industry (Oil Careers & Air Energi, 2013).

The pool of potential talent is too small, and companies are scrambling to cope with the crunch (Financial Times, 2014). The lack of experienced professionals to fill the current industry demand led to an environment of talent poaching within the industry (ASF Bauer College of Business, 2006). However, recruiting from a competitor is a stopgap approach, which does not contribute to anything except rising costs in the industry (Williams, 2011).

The Oil and Gas industry is beginning to adopt new, more effective approaches to meet the increasing demand for skilled workers. A recent Oil and Gas industry benchmark study argued that “while we cannot fully duplicate and replace the experience of retiring professionals in the sector, we can work smarter through structured approaches to managing industry knowledge and ensuring that the competence built is effectively transferred to younger generations” (DNV, 2014). Successful companies are thinking long term and building new talent pipelines, developing targeted interventions, assessing the business impact of skills shortages and considering the options available to build competency (FMI, 2013). According to Oil & Gas UK (2014) some retirees are returning to the Oil and Gas workforce in a number of flexible arrangements in order to share their skills, experience and knowledge with upcoming colleagues. Other initiatives include helping to facilitate the transition of skilled people into the industry from other

sectors, where skills such as engineering, logistics and project management are widely transferable to the Oil and Gas industry.

Since the commencement of this study in 2013 an oil price crisis has hit the Oil and Gas industry. Up until 2015 skills shortage was seen as one of the main challenges facing the Oil and Gas industry, however today it has dropped down the list of immediate priorities. Currently the Oil and Gas industry appears to be more focused on costs reduction initiatives, both in the short and longer term which includes downsizing the workforce and redundancies. This does not mean that there is a reduced demand for skilled workers in the Oil and Gas Industry; commentators argue that when the price of oil eventually increases and picks up again, as it has done so many times in the past, the Oil and Gas industry may re-awake to find itself in a more severe situation with skill shortage issues than was foreseen before the oil price crises began (Camps, 2015).

2.3 Building capability as a response

Implementation of an Employee Development strategy is also seen as a viable way of creating the competent, responsible and motivated workforce the Oil and Gas industry needs. In a research report entitled “Skill Builders Versus Skill Buyers” (Skillsoft, 2015) it was argued that business leaders need to look within the organisation first in order to create a highly skilled workforce that will not only boost employee performance but future proof the business.

Employee Development refers to the steps taken within an organisation to facilitate improvement in skills, behaviours and abilities that are necessary for long-term personal effectiveness and contribute to the organisation’s prospects of remaining competitive. Such a strategy of developing employees can be utilized to maintain a company’s skill base, implement multi-skilling and to implement effective succession planning. This strategy also provides benefits for employees in terms of personal development, wider job opportunities, career advancement and greater job satisfaction (Starling & Robertson, 2004).

Hiltrop (1999) argued that Employee Development does not happen by quick fixes, simple programs, or management speeches. It involves adopting principles and attitudes, which in turn determine and guide behaviour. It is a way of thinking as well as acting, and it begins with the realisation that there is a strong link between competitiveness and effective people management. A 2008 study (Booz & Company, 2008) also concluded that Oil and Gas organisations that proactively manage their capability will have a far higher probability of being able to deliver on the potential of their asset portfolio. The study additionally highlighted that effective management of ‘People Issues’ is now a strategic business challenge, and that short term gains will not deliver long term solutions to the problem. Short term fixes are inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the challenge.

2.4 Who are line managers

Many organisations are trying to devolve Employee Development responsibilities to line managers and see this as an essential step in moving the company or institution forward (Mindell, 1995). Tansky & Cohen, 2001 noted that line managers, who are involved with employees on a daily basis, are in a position to assist their employees in development. According to Hirsh et al (2004) organisations that manage to achieve effective staff development by line managers will be better able to engage and motivate their staff, and to increase their business contribution.

Cohen (2013) suggested that line managers can be best defined as first-level managers who directly involved at the operational or service end of the organisation. Ulrich (1997) argued that line managers have ultimate responsibility for both the outcomes and the processes within an organisation, and to deliver these outcomes, line managers need to understand Employee Development as a critical source of competitiveness. Hutchinson & Purcell (2003) defined line managers as managers who are responsible for a work group to a higher level of management, and who are placed in the lower layers of the management hierarchy, normally at the first level. They tend to have employees reporting to them who themselves do not have any management or supervisory responsibility. According to Newstrom (2006) line managers are responsible for getting the “line” employees to carry out the plans and policies set by executives and middle managers. Line managers coordinate the work of others and they are frequently the ‘experts’ in their departments and their promotion in many instances is based on their ability to perform the technical aspects of the role rather than for their leadership or management capabilities.

Line managers are sometimes considered as a homogenous group (Watson et al, 2007) and the line manager categorisation can cover a wide range of management levels such as first-line managers, first-level supervisors, supervisors, managers. (Thornhill & Saunders, 1998). In this particular study the term “line manager” shall be used to describe anyone who directly manages other employees and is responsible for the administrative management of the individual as well as the functional management. The job responsibilities include directly supporting the development of subordinate employees.

2.5 The importance of line managers' support for subordinate employees' development

Line managers are increasingly required to support subordinate employees in their learning and career development (Kidd & Smewing, 2001), and according to Nijman & Gelissen, (2011) support by line managers is often believed to be the most influential kind of support in assuring the effectiveness of developmental employee activities concerning both learning and transfer of learning at the workplace. Paustian-Underdahl et al (2013) argued that supportive supervision – subordinates' perceptions of the degree to which line managers value their contributions and care about their personal and professional needs and well-being – is an important way that line managers can help employees succeed in today's business environment.

Cohen (2013) argued that it is when line managers engage, interact and work with employees both guiding and sharing leadership responsibilities with them as part of everyday work that learning is best facilitated. According to Gill (2005), the best way to learn, by far, is being shown how to do things and then practising them. It will often be the immediate line manager who will show employees, especially relatively new ones, how to do things, and it is line managers who play the strongest part in structuring people's actual experience of doing a job. Xu & Cooper Thomas (2011) studied how leaders achieve high employee engagement and found that line managers who act in ways that support and develop team members can expect to have team members who show higher levels of engagement. Line managers identify and select tasks appropriate to the learner's level of readiness, and establish pathways of learning activities that provide engagement in tasks of increasing accountability and complexity (Coetzer, 2006). Coetzer (2007) contended that a line manager contributes to an employee's learning through facilitating access to close guidance from a co-worker who can reveal "tricks of the trade" (Billett, 2001) that novices are unlikely to discover on their own. According to Hutchinson & Purcell, (2007) line managers are critical conduits of learning; from induction, the organising of buddies, the design of jobs that stretch, the learning function of team working and problem solving, the provision of coaching (both for poor, or new, performers and the budding stars), to the assessment of development needs both formally in the annual performance management cycle and informally as necessary or opportune. Hutchinson &

Purcell, (2007) further contended that even in formal training programmes line managers play an important role; in sponsoring people, in sometimes paying for the cost out of their budget, in giving time to attend, and in evaluating the utility of the course. Mindell (1995) suggested that when line managers own and drive training and development, performance improvements usually result.

Renwick & MacNeil (2002) suggested the following benefits of line manager involvement in Employee Development:

- Employee Development issues are solved at source (lowest level),
- Employee Development issues receiving a business focus,
- Line managers who make their own Employee Development decisions are more likely to commit to them,
- Promotes local management accountability and responsibility for Employee Development,
- Reduces training and development costs, as line managers know what development of subordinate employees is needed,
- Promotes the case that Employee Development is an essential element of every line manager's job and cannot be transferred to HR specialists,
- Enables Employee Development decisions to be tailored to suit local circumstances,
- Increases the speed of decision making in Employee Development,
- Provides increased awareness of Employee Development issues throughout the organisation,
- Helps satisfy line willingness to take part in Employee Development initiatives,
- Raises prospect of building line and HR partnerships in working on Employee Development,
- Releases line to enact Employee Development strategies on their own if they wish to do so.

Hirsh et al (2004) considered the characteristics of good development support and found that good development is delivered through a supportive relationship between a 'giver' and a 'receiver', usually a line manager and their subordinate. Relationships that are developmental seem unusual in the degree of engagement the line manager has with the individual employee as a person, and the warmth of

the relationship. Trust is developed through this concern and a genuine desire to see the employee do well. Positive encouragement is offered. These relationships are usually characterised by frequent informal interaction, detailed discussion of work issues, and a relative lack of hierarchy. A subordinate employee would consider a relationship as contributing positively to career development if the line manager provided either helpful information (feedback) on career advancement opportunities in the organisation or personal support or both (Kram, 1985). Paustian-Underdahl et al (2013), drawing on previous work (e.g. Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Scandura & Williams, 2004; Kraimer et al, 2011; Gilbert et al, 2011), indicated that the concept of line manager supportiveness has been linked consistently to subordinate performance – benefits of having supportive line managers in the workplace include enhanced job performance, satisfaction, collaboration, and organisational commitment for subordinate employees, as well as reduced turnover intentions.

On the other hand, Hirsh et al (2004) found that characteristics of bad development support included total neglect of development identification of development needs, deliberate career blocking, aggression and bullying, erratic responses to individuals asking for support, and negative or inconsistent feedback. Greenhaus et al (1990) found that the absence of line manager interest in a subordinate's career aspirations and infrequent provision of performance feedback are likely to stunt an employee's professional growth on the job. Similarly, Hirsh et al's (2004) study showed that a lack of development support by line managers negatively affects subordinate employees and can lead to an emotional cycle of reduced job satisfaction and motivation, reduced organisational commitment and either prolonged frustration or escape. Ladyshevsky (2010) explored the line manager as coach as a driver of organisational development and found that where line managers fail in this role it leads to a loss of engagement and motivation of staff.

Gibb (2003) was concerned that the advantages of line manager involvement in Employee Development are frequently heard, but that disadvantages should also be considered. For example, there is no reason to believe that line managers can be better skilled developers than specialists trained in learning and development at work and that depending on line managers to fulfil these roles may mean marginalising specialists in learning and development at work that could result in

there being less development for many. Gibb (2003) also contended that it is naïve to assume that relationships between line managers and staff can be the key relationship to guide a subordinate employee's development. This is because the line manager-subordinate employee relationship may involve clashes of interests that the line manager may not be in a position to resolve effectively.

2.6 Roles and responsibilities of line managers supporting their employees' development

Hyman & Cunningham (1998) contended that line managers are required to take on new people management roles, whether it be through a style which is “hard” and control centred or more “soft” and facilitative. Park et al (2008) argued that learning-committed management has seven subthemes about the role of line managers, including (1) line managers who create informal learning opportunities, (2) line managers who serve as developers (coaches or mentors), (3) line managers and leaders who visibly support and make space for learning, (4) line managers and leaders who encourage risk taking, (5) line managers who instil the importance of sharing knowledge and developing others, (6) line managers who give positive feedback and recognition, and (7) line managers who serve as role models.

Simonsen (1997)	Kaye (2001)	Leibowitz & Schlossberg (1981)	De Jong (1999)	Hirsh et al (2004)	Leibowitz et al (1986)	van der Pol (2011)
Coach	Role model	Communicator	Supporter	Coach	Coach	Mentor-coach
Reality Tester	Information source	Counsellor	Coach	Guardian	Appraiser	Facilitator
Adviser	Motivator	Appraiser	Analyst	Counsellor	Adviser	Director
Planner	Counsellor/Coach	Coach		Facilitator	Referrer	
	Diagnostician	Mentor				
	Training specialist	Adviser				
		Broker				
		Referral Agent				
		Advocate				

Table 2.1: Roles and responsibilities of line managers for supporting subordinate employees' development

Central to learning within an organisation is the role line managers play. Table 2.1 shows that the coaching role was found to be most commonly described in the review of literature.

2.6.1 The line manager as coach

Leisink & Knies (2011) showed that those line managers who are more competent in coaching abilities more frequently support development of their employees. Gregory & Levy (2011) defined employee coaching as a developmental activity in which an employee works one-on-one with his or her line manager to improve current job performance and enhance his or her capabilities for future roles and/or challenges, the success of which is based on the relationship between the employee and line manager. Grant (2010) adapted Kilburg's (1996) "working definition of executive coaching" to define workplace coaching as being a helping relationship formed between an individual who has line manager responsibilities in an organisation and an employee, in which the line manager uses a wide variety of cognitive and behavioural techniques to enhance communication with the employee in order to help the employee achieve a mutually defined set of goals, with the aim of improving his or her work performance and, consequently, the effectiveness of the organisation. Ellinger et al (1999) identified a role transition continuum whereby line managers shifted between their roles as line managers to coaches. The progression from recognizing that there are role distinctions between being a line manager and being a coach appears to be an initial step for line managers in the movement of their mental models toward the concept of being a coach or facilitator of learning as acknowledged in the learning organisation literature. The next step along the continuum appears to be role transition, where the line managers experience role switching but become increasingly comfortable in coaching roles. At this point, line managers express their preference for being in a coaching rather than a managerial role. The final step along the continuum appears to be role adoption, when the line manager fully identifies with the role of coach or facilitator of learning. Ellinger et al (2008) observed that not all line managers adopt a facilitative coaching role and may find it challenging to make the shift from an authoritarian, prescriptive role to one that is empowering and developmentally focused.

2.6.2 The line manager as mentor

Another role which becomes apparent within the literature is the mentor role. According to Bell & Goldsmith (2013) not all mentors are line managers, but most effective line managers act as mentors. There appears to be some overlap between the coach and mentor role, because both roles are motivating the employee to learn, and are guiding the employee to develop his/her skills and career; improve performance; achieve professional goals; and meet personal development needs. Clutterbuck (2008) argued that if there is a generic difference, it is that coaching in most applications addresses performance in some aspect of an individual's work or life; while mentoring is more often associated with much broader, holistic development and with career progress. Raabe & Beehr (2003) investigated the differences in perceptions and impact of formal mentoring versus line manager mentoring. The results of the study suggested that mentoring functions might be best performed by the line manager because they are likely to be naturally closer (spatially) to the mentees during working hours, and they appeared to have some advantage in terms of impact on the mentees' job satisfaction, turnover intentions and organisational

2.6.3 The line manager as facilitator

A further role discussed in the literature is that of facilitator – line managers who are effective facilitators will utilise their own learning and interpersonal skills to encourage informal learning opportunities, provide learning facilities, and offer the employees room to make their own decisions regarding their professional development (MacNeil, 2004). The facilitator will provide the necessary means once the employee has decided to develop oneself professionally. Thus, there is a difference between the mentor-coach and the facilitator in that the mentor-coach stimulates employees to develop themselves professionally, and the facilitator will leave this decision up to the employee. Whitworth (2007) suggested that the facilitator is most effective by listening and drawing out insights rather than providing answers directly. Ellinger & Bostrom (2002) studied line managers' beliefs about their roles as facilitators of learning. The results indicate that line managers in this study perceive the roles of line manager and of facilitator of learning to be distinct from each other.

2.6.4 The line manager as director

Van der Pol (2011) studied the role of a line manager as a director (of workplace learning) who is steering, instructing, and directing the professional development of subordinates. Somech & Wenderow's (2006) study of the impact of a directive leadership style indicated that directors only develop their employees professionally, if it will benefit themselves by, for instance, reducing a problem in a particular organisational process.

2.6.5 Ambiguities between the roles

Van der Pol (2011) identified that there is discrepancy within the literature between the preferable roles of line managers and their actual roles, and performed a study to clarify the actual role of line managers on the professional development of employees, specifically the effect of the line manager's role on the learning activities of employees. The results showed that the mentor-coach, facilitator as well as director role have a significant and positive effect on the employee satisfaction with the line manager's role. The mentor-coach and facilitator have the strongest effect on the satisfaction. The director role also has a positive effect, although lower than the effect of the mentor-coach and facilitator. It is assumed that mentor-coaches initiate learning activities in which the employees can participate, and moreover, stimulate the participation in those learning activities. Facilitators do not necessarily influence the participation of employees in learning activities; they provide the employee with the necessary means in order to actually execute the learning activity. Thus, it is assumable that the influence of facilitators is probably less than the influence of mentor-coaches. Directors do not stimulate the participation in learning activities unless developing employees will benefit them. Pousa & Mathieu (2010) found that line managers can be very motivated to coach and can even perform coaching as a usual managerial activity, but when receiving external pressures for achieving challenging goals they will tend to change their behaviour from coaching to directing.

2.7 Line managers and workplace learning

Whilst many learning activities are learner-initiated, many are facilitated and connected to the work context by line managers (Cunningham & Hillier, 2013). However, whether employees respond to a workplace designed to support learning, depends largely on the quality of social interactions and the attitudes of employees and line manager (Silverman, 2003).

From empirical work, Matthews et al (1992) suggested a variety of strategies that line managers can adopt to promote workplace learning:

- Placing employees into different functions, locations or departments so that they gain experience of different parts of the organisational environment and are able to observe or shadow other employees,
- Creating learning opportunities by arranging the employee's activities (progressive graduation of tasks),
- Widening the scope of employee's job roles by devolving responsibility, changing the depth of supervision and changing the spread of activities engaged in by the employee,
- Enhancing employees' awareness of skill and understanding by providing candid feedback and debriefing,
- Helping employees to assess their job roles so that they are aware of the competencies and skills required.

Jennings & Wargnier (2003) stressed the importance of line managers ensuring that new knowledge is applied or a new skill is practiced. Line managers need to provide their people with the opportunity to practice, to experience new things, to learn from them and to reflect on them. Ideally, line managers should help learners to set priorities (linked to development plan objectives and appraisals). As the company's learners acquire new knowledge and in turn put this into practice, the line manager should monitor and tutor where necessary. As learners improve and share their newly acquired skills and knowledge, the line managers should identify best practices, encourage sharing and reward good performance. After learners have assessed themselves and set new priorities, line managers can prolong the learning process and ensure that new skills are maintained by providing on-the-job coaching, giving continuous feedback – actions that reinforce and maximize assimilation.

Eraut (2007) argued that line managers have a major influence on workplace learning and culture that extends far beyond their job descriptions. Eraut's (2004) research evidence indicated that learning at work is either facilitated or constrained by (1) the organisation and allocation of work and (2) relationships and the social climate of the workplace. The informal role of line managers is probably more important for this purpose than their formal role, and people's learning at work is greatly affected by the personality, interpersonal skills and learning orientation of their line manager. This concurred with Eraut et al (2001), who argued that a major factor affecting a person's learning at work is the personality, interpersonal skills, knowledge and learning orientation of their line manager.

Ellstrom (2012) identified four patterns concerning how line managers handled issues of co-workers' learning and development. These four patterns may be ordered along a continuum ranging from an enabling pattern to a constraining pattern of managerial work, depending on the degree to which they focus on and deal with developmental issues in their everyday work as line managers. In a highly enabling pattern the line managers' work with development issues was integrated with and "embedded in" a range of everyday activities. When enabling to a lesser degree the line managers' work with development issues was integrated with and "embedded in" a range of everyday activities. Common to the enabling patterns of managerial work was a dialogue-oriented practice, which meant that to a great extent, the line managers used the meetings to discuss and resolve a range of problems. They listened to the issues that were raised by the staff and encouraged discussions during meetings. In a constraining pattern the line managers had ambitions to work with development issues, but routine tasks took over in practice. Finally, in the most constraining pattern the line managers expressed little or no interest in working with learning and development. The main focus was rather on the operations and the day-to-day work of the units. The two patterns of managerial work defined as constraining are characterised by a lack of focus on learning and development issues on the part of the line managers, even though they may have had an ambition to work with such issues. Although the line managers in some cases expressed development ambitions and ideas, they did not realise them.

2.8 How readily engaged are line managers in their role as employee developers?

McGovern et al (1997) viewed that attempts to devolve HRM to the line in any grand sense can only be regarded as “quixotic”. Likewise, Nehles et al (2006) suggested that line managers find implementing HR practices at the operational level difficult and show reluctance with their HR responsibilities. Lynton & Pareek (2000) depicted part of the spectrum of line managers’ reactions to being employee developers as ranging from hostility and reluctance, through to being critical and sceptical, to being supportive, but little involved. Many line managers resist assisting their staff in career development (Hyman & Cunningham, 1998) and concerns have arisen on the ability and willingness of line managers to carry out HR tasks properly including developing employees in their careers (Drake et al, 2002). Drake et al (2002) also observed that line managers were ill-prepared to provide effective and responsible support for subordinate employees’ development, but that ethical standards from both caring and professional perspectives suggest that they have an obligation to meet these development needs. Cunningham et al (2004) referred to this as a “rhetoric and reality” gap.

These views are also supported by data. Gilley et al (2010) explored coaching and managerial skills and behaviours from the perspective of employees, adopting the premise that subordinate assessments of managerial behaviour provide the most accurate ratings of leader performance (Hogan et al, 1994). The study asked questions about the four most significant predictors of coaching: the abilities to communicate, motivate, facilitate employee growth and development, and possession of overall skills necessary for the position of line manager. Respondents to the Gilley et al (2010) study indicated that their line managers communicate appropriately only 33% of the time, motivate employees with a frequency of approximately 27%, encourage employees’ growth and development about 32% of the time and “usually” or “always” possess the necessary skills for their jobs about 53% of the time. The infrequency with which line managers display behaviours associated with coaching also supported the Gilley et al (2010) hypothesis that line managers engage in coaching infrequently (less than 50% of the time).

A McKinsey study (Guthridge et al, 2006) suggested that Employee Development processes can’t work if line managers don’t think it’s important to develop their

people. More than half of the study respondents identified an insufficient commitment to developing talent on the part of line managers as a critical barrier. A more recent survey by global human resources services firm Towers Watson (2013) found that line managers are ill-equipped to handle key aspects of Employee Development. The survey reported that the biggest gap companies must improve on is line manager engagement as only one in four respondents say line managers are effective at providing career management support to employees.

Brandl et al (2009) argued that only when organisational decision makers know which specific HR duties line managers consider important and which they consider less important can they determine where they need to provide support and assistance. Therefore, it seems now appropriate to consider the factors influencing whether or not line managers perform those roles, take on those responsibilities and exhibit those behaviours that earlier Chapters demonstrated are so important in driving Employee Development. According to Sambrook & Stewart (2000) influencing factors can be divided into those that inhibit and those that facilitate - and the same factors could have both supportive and inhibiting influence on organisational learning, including the key role of managers. They argued that identifying such factors within an organisation is an important step in recognizing how learning might be hindered or helped, before considering strategies and practices to better manage and cope with these influences.

2.9 Factors influencing line managers' engagement

So far Employee Development has been discussed as being a prospective remedy to staffing/skills shortages in the Oil and Gas industry, and that line managers can play a prominent part in this. Previous research has shown that line managers are often not engaged in this task, so the reasons why will need to be investigated. Part of this investigation will require the usage of a recognised and reliable framework for studying the factors influencing engagement in a particular task.

2.9.1. What is meant by work engagement

Kahn (1990) formally defined engagement as the simultaneous employment and expression of a person's 'preferred self' in task behaviours that promote connections to work and to others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional) and active, full performances. Shuck & Wollard (2010) defined engagement as an individual's cognitive, emotional, and behavioural state directed towards desired organisational outcomes, whereas engagement was defined by Bakker & Demerouti (2008) as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption.

Line manager engagement does not have physical properties, but Kahn (1992) noted that it is observed through the behavioural investment of personal physical, cognitive, and emotional energy into work roles. Line managers exhibit engagement when they become physically involved in tasks, whether alone or with others; are cognitively vigilant, focused, and attentive; and are emotionally connected to their work and to others in the service of their work (Kahn, 1990). Line managers who are highly engaged excel at their work through a willingness to adapt their behaviour toward communicated organisational outcomes (Shuck & Wollard, 2010). In contrast, line managers who are highly disengaged in their work roles withhold their physical, cognitive, and emotional energies, and this is reflected in task activity that is, at best, robotic, passive, and detached (Rich et al, 2010). Fleck & Inceoglu (2010) argued that when line managers are more engaged, they are in turn expected to perform more frequently a range of behaviours that are beneficial for the organisation.

2.9.2. A model of engagement

It would seem important to identify an appropriate, recognised framework to study engagement in more detail. The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model is a conceptual framework that can be applied in all occupational settings to identify potentially damaging job characteristics (job demands) and protective factors (job resources) that can be used to promote engagement (Balducci et al, 2011). At the heart of JD-R model lies the assumption that whereas every occupation may have its own specific risk factors associated with job stress, these factors can be classified in two general categories (i.e. job demands and job resources), thus constituting an overarching model that may be applied to various occupational settings, irrespective of the particular demands and resources involved (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Mauno et al's 2007 findings indicated that the JD–R model might prove to be a very appropriate theoretical framework in which to explore the cause–effect relationships between different experiences in the work context. Albrecht (2012) described the JD-R model as the most widely cited and widely used theoretical model in the engagement literature, whilst Schaufeli & Taris (2014) argued that the fact that all sorts of demands, resources, and outcomes can be included is a strength as well as a weakness of the model - it adds to its flexibility, in that it can be used in many different contexts, but this comes at the cost of limited generalizability. Van den Broeck et al (2013) summarised that the JD-R model has been validated across a broad range of professions including high skilled and low skilled, across gender and age, and in different national and cultural contexts. Schaufeli & Taris (2014) suggested that this implies the JD-R model can be tailored to the specific needs of the organisation, given any specific situation. However, Schaufeli & Taris (2014) also concede that rather than being an explanatory model, the JD-R model is a descriptive model that specifies relations between classes of variables without providing any particular psychological explanation - the JD-R model specifies what kind of job and personal characteristics lead to what kind of psychological states and outcomes but does not tell us why this would be so.

According to the JD-R model (Demerouti et al, 2001), demands reduce a line manager's engagement through a process of burnout (i.e., physical and emotional exhaustion), while resources increase a line manager's engagement through

facilitation (i.e., increasing motivation). The converse may also be true – work engagement decreases when line managers work in an environment that lacks job resources (Xanthopoulou et al, 2013).

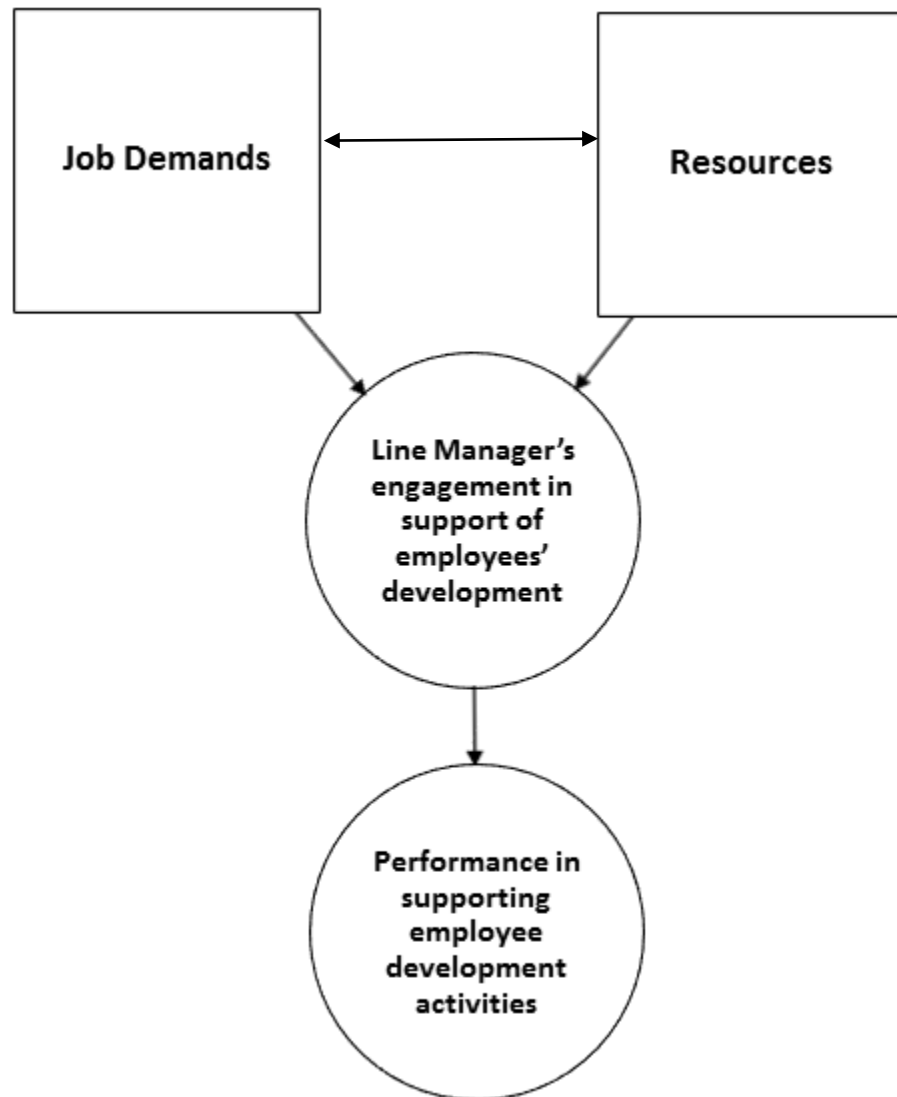


Figure 2.2: The Job Demands-Resources Model (Schaufeli & Bakker (2004); Hakanen et al (2008); Korunka et al (2009); Llorens et al (2007))

Job demands refer to those physical, psychological, social, or organisational aspects of the job that require sustained physical and/or psychological (cognitive and emotional) effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain physiological and/or psychological costs. Examples include role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, high levels of workload, performance demands, and time pressure. Job resources refer to those physical, psychological, social, or

organisational aspects of the job that are (1) functional in achieving work goals; (2) reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs; or (3) stimulate personal growth and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job resources, which initiate a motivational process, can come from the organisation (e.g., pay, career opportunities, and job security), interpersonal and social relations (line manager and co-worker support, and team climate), the organisation of work (e.g., role clarity, goal clarity and participation in decision making), and from the task itself (e.g., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and performance feedback).

Demerouti & Bakker (2011) contended that job resources may be located at the macro, organisational level (e.g. salary or wages, career opportunities, job security), the interpersonal level (e.g. line manager and co-worker support, team climate), the specific job position (e.g. role clarity, participation in decision making), and at the level of the task (e.g. skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and performance feedback).

2.9.3. Balancing job demands and resources

Ulrich (1997) argued that organisations should find ways to resolve the demand/resource imbalance – when demands and resources are appropriately balanced line managers are able to contribute, they can commit themselves to improvement and can be competent enough to make the right improvements. A central assumption in the JD-R model is that resources become more salient and gain their motivational potential when line managers are confronted with high job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

According to Bakker et al (2011) the JD-R model suggests equity sensibly being in-built in the organisation–line manager dynamic whereby both the organisation and line managers negotiate and perceive an appropriate equilibrium in the provision of demands and resources within the working context. Employers invest in their employees by offering sufficient job resources, and employees pay back with high levels of energy and dedication, resulting in high-level performance.

2.9.4. Engagement and performance

Rich et al (2010) found that practices that engender engagement among line managers can enhance their job performance. These findings suggested that it may be worthwhile to focus resources on practices that enhance line manager

engagement. Gruman & Saks (2011) also argued that it may be more effective for organisations to focus less on managing performance than on managing the context in which performance occurs, and on fostering the development of engagement as a driver of enhanced performance. Related to this, Kim et al (2012) examined the relationship between work engagement and performance through a review of the empirical literature. The results of this study imply not only that work engagement is a relevant factor for line managers' performance enhancement, but also that individual work engagement can be managed and developed by antecedents that organisations could provide and enhance.

2.9.5. Creating a climate for work engagement

Bakker et al (2011) argued that when line managers perceive that their organisation provides a supportive, involving, and challenging climate, and hence accommodates their psychological needs, they are more likely to respond by investing time and energy and by being psychologically involved in the work of their organisation. Bakker et al (2011) hypothesized that “climate for engagement” will influence line manager perceptions of job demands and job resources, which in turn have been shown to influence work engagement and performance (Rich et al, 2010). Saks (2006) suggested that there might be antecedents to engagement and that focusing on these antecedents could aid in the development of engaged line managers.

Wollard & Shuck (2011) conducted a structured literature review of antecedents to work engagement and identified that these antecedents can be either individual or contextual in nature. Salanova et al (2011) also indicated that the nature of the task at hand is an important determinant of whether work engagement is experienced. Kahn (1990) assumed that line managers' perceptions of their work contexts and their own individual characteristics foster psychological conditions that directly influence the willingness to personally engage in work roles. Lepine & Crawford (2010) argued that Kahn's (1990) conceptualisation of engagement is important to consider as a mechanism that transmits effects of individual and organisational factors to different aspects of job performance. Albrecht (2010) argued that the JD–R model might be expanded to more explicitly acknowledge contextual factors such as organisational leadership, organisational strategy, organisational vision and values, organisational culture, organisational structure and HR systems.

2.10 An operating framework for considering factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of employees' development

Chapter 2.9 highlighted that it is important to consider the effects of individual and contextual factors in the conceptualization of engagement, and that engagement can enhance job performance. Chapter 2.9 also emphasised that there is a strong theoretical case for interventions being able to influence engagement (Bakker et al, 2011) and that investing in resources may pay off more than focusing on the reduction of job demands (Llorens et al, 2006).

Because Employee Development activities often occur in the organisational context, the characteristics of the organisation likely impact participation in development activities (Noe et al, 1997). Ozcelik & Uyargil (2015) suggested that it is not purely the organisation factors, but also (senior) managerial contributions via abilities-skills and also opportunities provided to line managers that can bring about effective HRM systems implementation. Similarly, according to Keegan et al (2012), issues of employee well-being embedded in HRM responsibilities may be neglected by line managers who are insufficiently trained, or motivated to carry out these activities, or indeed have time to devote to them. Ozcelik & Uyargil (2015) proposed a conceptual model for line managers' HRM implementation effectiveness, which integrated organisational factors together with ability, motivation and opportunity factors as follows:

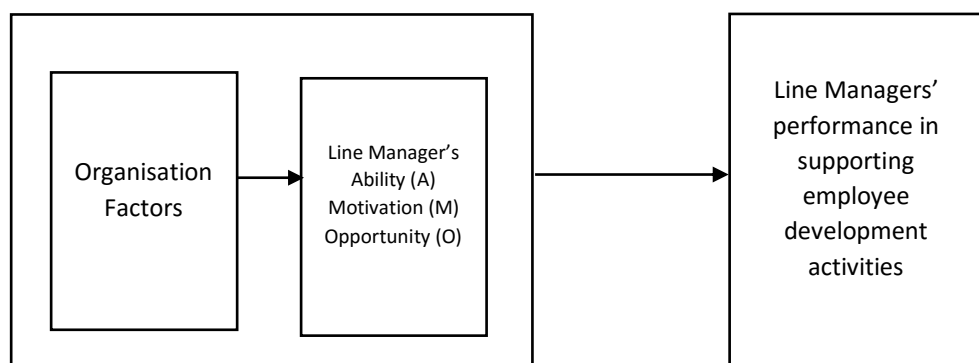


Figure 2.3: A conceptual model for line managers' HRM implementation effectiveness: integrating social factors and A-M-O factors (Ozcelik & Uyargil, 2015)

The ability, motivation and opportunity (A-M-O) model, initially proposed by Bailey (1993) and developed by Appelbaum et al (2000), has become a commonly accepted framework to explain how HRM policies might work and impact on performance, and is helpful in deciding which HRM policies should be developed and implemented. A-M-O theory is often used in HRM performance research – more than half the articles published after 2000 have made use of A-M-O theory (Paauwe, 2009). A-M-O theory has also been used in research related to this particular study, for example, Bos-Nehles et al (2013) study “Employee Perceptions of Line Management Performance: Applying the A-M-O Theory to Explain the Effectiveness of Line Managers' HRM Implementation” (see Chapter 2.16.1). According to Hutchinson & Purcell (2003), the A-M-O model is important because of its links to appropriate behaviour in the workplace in the way people do their jobs.

Given an understanding of these organisational, ability, motivation, and opportunity factors as well as a comprehension of the extent to which these factors are mediated by individual demographic and other contextual variables – it is contended that it may be possible for organisations to intervene at the organisational, job and individual levels to mitigate job demands and provide relevant resources in order to enhance line managers’ engagement in support of subordinate employees’ development.

Therefore, by combining:

- the JD-R model (Figure 2.2), and
- the line managers’ HRM implementation effectiveness model (Figure 2.3),

a representation of various factors influencing line managers’ engagement in support of employees’ development can be set out in an operating framework depicted in Figure 2.4 below:

This operating framework is not intended to represent a hierarchy and does not position one factor to be more important than another, but illustrates some of the factors at contextual, individual and resource levels that can impact line manager engagement and performance in supporting subordinate employees’ development. Although these categories are distinct they are interrelated, as illustrated by the arrows.

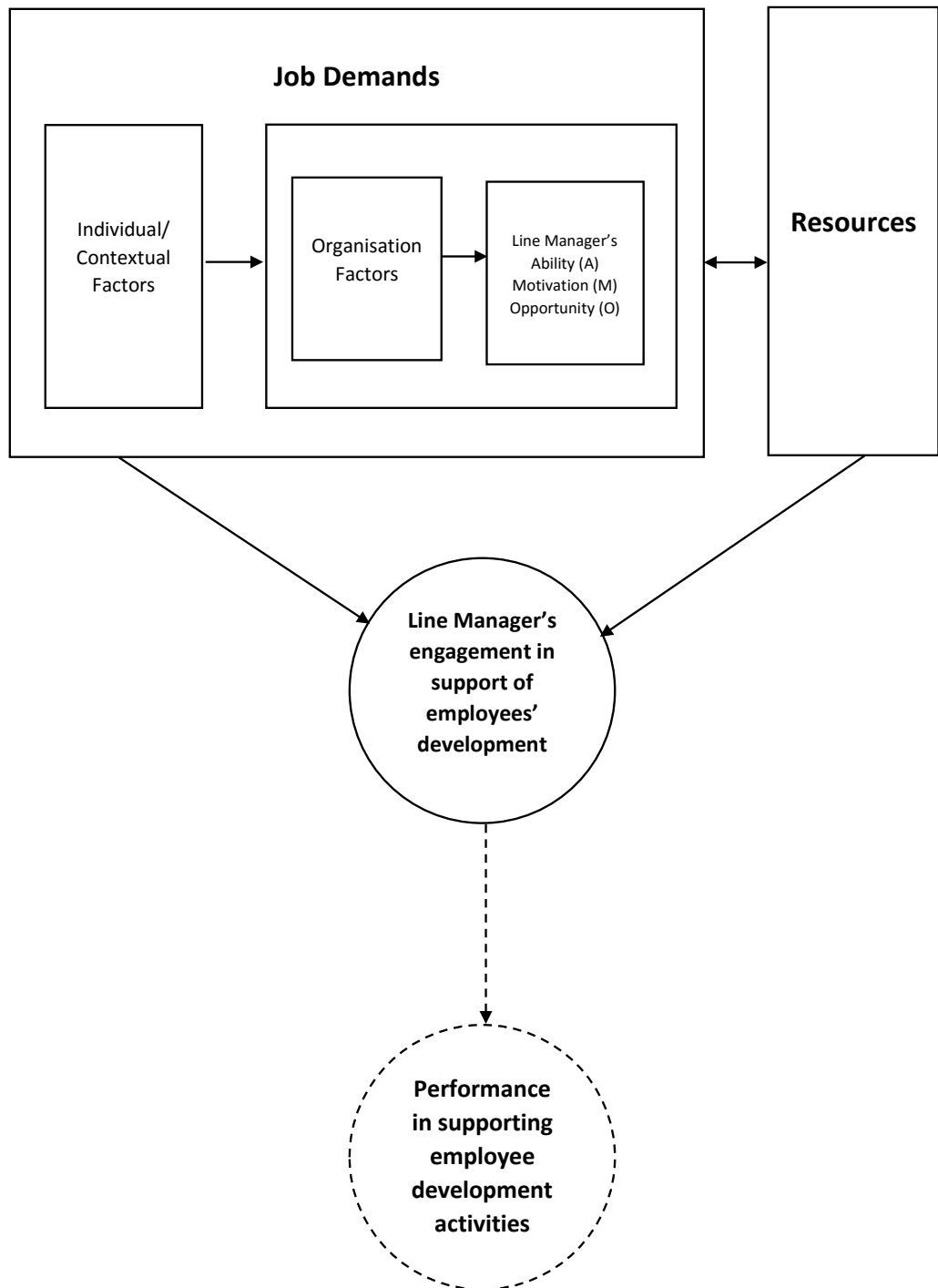


Figure 2.4: An operating framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement and performance in supporting subordinate employees' development

Chapters 2.11 to 2.14, following, encapsulate a review of what previous researchers consider to be individual factors, and contextual factors (including organisation, line managers' ability-motivation-opportunity) that influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

2.11 The importance of context

Jacobs & Washington (2003) suggested that individuals in organisations exist within complex systems having their own histories, idiosyncrasies, competing sets of interests and on-going work pressures. Mowday & Sutton (1993) characterised context as consisting of constraints versus opportunities for behaviour. Similarly, Johns (2006) defined context as situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organisational behaviour as well as functional relationships between variables. Sikora & Ferris (2011) described contextual factors as being issues that are shaped and determined by higher-level groups within the organisation and by the organisation itself.

Dirkx (1999) emphasised the importance of gaining an understanding of contextual factors and the role they play in shaping line managers' beliefs and behaviours in their role as facilitators of learning. Dirkx (1999) also argued that what line managers come to believe, what they perceive to be the learning needs of workers, and what they value as "outcomes" of the learning process reflect the sociocultural and political contexts of the specific organisations in which learning is taking place. Dick & Hyde (2006) argued that line managers have a critical role to play in the career development of employees, but that due to cultural and institutional processes, the extent of this involvement is likely to be limited. Certain aspects of the context and the environment can either support or hinder line managers from influencing employee's professional development (Ellinger et al, 2011). Fleck & Inceoglu (2010) argued the characteristics, or features, of the work environment consist of the features of an employee's job role, and the features of the wider organisation in which the job role is embedded. This means that the work environment shapes the experience employees have of their work, and can drive the employee towards becoming engaged, or they can push the employee towards disengagement.

Page et al's (2003) findings suggested that line managers are more likely to see both their successes and hindrances as a function of their environment. Recognizing this, Conchie et al (2013) addressed the factors that give rise to line managers' leadership in promoting employees' engagement (in safety) within the construction industry. In this study line managers interviewed rarely mentioned individual factors as having any influence on their engagement in (safety)

leadership behaviours. Conchie et al (2013) concluded that this may reflect a general tendency among line managers within construction to attribute their behaviours externally or it may simply reflect the fact that line managers' behaviours within construction are most strongly influenced by contextual factors.

Tarique & Schuler (2010) noted that organisations will need to design HRM systems that fit the contours of the present context while also anticipating the future concerns of varied stakeholders. A related recommendation was that future researchers can examine the ways organisations can be most effective in making generic HRM systems, and then tailoring activities in order to be sensitive to regional and industrial conditions in efficient ways. Bos-Nehles (2010) argued that in order to determine and put emphasis on those factors which constrain line managers in performing HR practices effectively, it is necessary to know the organisational situation in which line managers operate and its effect on the line manager role.

Therefore, it seems important to take account of contextual conditions while developing an understanding the nature of line manager engagement in Employee Development, the relevant resources that can be applied and the impact of those resources. If it is known which work environment features are affecting engagement in a particular context, then it can be understood which levers to pull in order to change engagement (Fleck & Inceoglu, 2010). Contextual factors (organisational and task) may be easier to “manipulate” than individual factors when stimulating line manager engagement and performance in supporting subordinate employees' development (Marsick, 2009).

For further analysis, contextual variables can therefore be divided into two main categories:

1. Organisation factors that line managers perceive as representing the ideas, values and beliefs of the organisation, and
2. Task factors that enable, motivate and provide the opportunity for line managers to engage in activities that support subordinate employees' development.

2.12 Organisation factors

Park et al (2008) argued that an organisational context can be recognised as organisational culture, structures, and conditions fostering workplace learning. Organisational factors may be considered as any actions that employees perceive as representing the ideas, values and beliefs of the organisation.

Organisational culture

Leslie et al (1998) argued that the contextual factor with the strongest impact on informal learning is organisational culture. Page et al's (2003) findings reinforced the importance of organisational culture as an environmental determinant of management effectiveness and elevated its role over other environmental variables. Van den Berg & Wilderom (2004) defined organisational culture as shared perceptions of organisational work practices within organisational units that may differ from other organisational units. Ferris et al (1998) contended that the attitudes, beliefs, values, and political issues that make up the organisational culture serve to drive the development of HRM policies, practices and systems. Evered & Selman (1989) also acknowledge that creating a coaching culture is important in promoting managerial coaching behaviours. Park (2011) studied whether organisational culture impacts managerial effectiveness related to supporting employees' learning. The results showed that a higher organisational learning culture led to higher managerial effectiveness. Additionally, Park (2011) found that organisational learning culture was positively related to psychological empowerment (that led to line managers being involved in taking responsibility and making decisions and being motivated to learn what they should do). Sikora & Ferris (2014) suggested that if line managers believe that their organisation's culture is one in which effective employee management isn't valued, they also may be less likely to implement their organisation's HR practices. Organisational culture forms the glue that holds the organisation together and stimulates employees to commit to the organisation and to perform (van den Berg & Wilderom, 2004). Conger (2002) described the culture of an organisation as being positive and supportive, or threatening and destructive. Conger's (2002) view was that a positive and supportive Employee Development culture values achievement motivation and gives many signs of recognition to people who make good contributions to the organisation. It also helps workers realize how their own actions can contribute to constructing unplanned career opportunities. It assists

workers to transform curiosity into opportunities for learning and exploration. When unexpected events occur, workers learn to see them as opportunities to be explored. An Employee Development culture teaches workers to network within the organisation to produce desirable chance learning events. An Employee Development culture teaches workers to overcome blocks to action. Ellinger's (2005) findings suggested that the degree of leadership learning-commitment leadership can lead influence the development of a learning culture that inhibits or facilitates informal workplace learning.

Hunt & Weintraub (2011) presented the organisational values and beliefs that serve as a foundation for a coaching friendly context, along with those that don't support a coaching friendly context, as shown in the following Table 2.2:

Supporting Values	Inhibiting Values
Trust and openness	Mistrust and fear
Tolerance of mistakes, learning from them	Intolerance of mistakes, blaming the perpetrator
Careful attention to hiring the right people	Lack of careful attention to hiring that supports competence
Learning for the long term is important	Focusing single-mindedly on evaluating today's performance
Reward systems shouldn't punish time spent developing people	Reward systems focus only on short-term results
People should feel valued as individuals	People are a "means to an end"

Table 2.2: Organisational values and a coaching context (Hunt & Weintraub, p.68, 2011)

Orth et al (1987) suggested that organisational climate is crucial in creating a coaching culture. The effectiveness of line managers supporting workplace learning depends significantly on whether the organisational climate is supportive of such managerial activity (Beattie, 2006). Van den Berg & Wilderom (2004) described organisational climate as line managers' perceptions of observable practices and processes.

Ferris et al (1996) demonstrated relationships between politics and organisational, job, and personal influences. In other words, politics can have either a positive or

negative effect on organisations. Ferris et al (1998) defined politics in organisations in terms of self-serving behaviours that may reside outside the formally approved set of systems and procedures by which the organisation operates. Political considerations might contribute to the flexibility of an organisation's HR practices, and line managers' subsequent implementation efforts (Sikora & Ferris, 2014).

Jeon & Kim (2012) investigated how organisational factors influence learning in the workplace and recommended that efforts should be made to ensure an organisational environment that fosters open communication because doing so can substantially contribute to the effectiveness of informal learning.

Anderson (2013), while examining the behaviours associated with managerial coaching and assessed the implications of leadership theory, found that the importance of leader-team member relationships (leader-member exchange) and occupational self-efficacy indicate that managerial coaching may be inhibited in individualized and competitive work cultures.

In terms of the kinds of organisational enabling structures that can facilitate or hinder workplace learning, Schuck (1985) drew attention to the need to foster an "environment of enquiry" supported by "managers of enquiry", in which employees talk to each other, share ideas and recognise workplace learning opportunities. Schuck (1985) argued that the challenge for organisations was to continue to develop this philosophy and to identify organisational dynamics that impede or prevent them. Whether employees respond to a workplace designed to support enquiry, depends largely on the quality of social interactions and the attitudes of employees and line managers (Silverman, 2003).

Leadership direction

Carter (2013) identified that at the heart of an ideal model for line manager facilitation of work related learning is the perception among line managers that the organisation supports their facilitative learning strategies and practices. Carter (2013) argued that overt organisational support in the form of acknowledgement and recognition acts to build line manager's confidence, their perceptions and their efforts in articulating appropriate connections between goals, workers and practice. Organisational support plays a key role in motivating and assisting line managers to develop and deploy strategies and apply appropriate skills to enable

workers to effectively combine work and learning. Well supported line managers' practices are anticipated to optimise worker learning and ongoing capability development. Carter (2013) further contended that the full value of the role is unlikely to be realised if the organisation continues to assume that it is sufficient to allow the facilitative learning role of line managers to continue as one that lacks identity and visibility as a practice. Bakker et al (2011) argued that when line managers perceive that their organisation provides a supportive, involving, and challenging climate, and hence accommodates their psychological needs, they are more likely to respond by investing time and energy and by being psychologically involved in the work of their organisation. Many organisational climates are not conducive to coaching, and line managers are not rewarded for developing employees. As a result, line managers are not motivated to initiate the new role of coach. In other words, without a management style that emphasizes coaching organisation wide, line managers may not recognise the benefits of coaching to themselves or their subordinates (McLean et al, 2005). McComb (2012) argued that organisational learning and renewal “begins at the top” and that leadership must be seen to support and have confidence in an organisation development initiative if it is to succeed. Ludwig & Frazier (2012) contended that senior management behaviour moderates the relationship between engagement and organisational outcomes – that senior management must be engaged for those further down the line to be engaged. Sikora & Ferris (2014) proposed that an organisational climate emphasising human resource implementation goals and rewards is positively associated with higher line manager implementation levels.

Goal orientation

The goal orientation of the organisation provides some insight into line managers who are willing to coach employees; those who work for organisations that adopt more long-term goals are more likely to coach than those who work for organisations with short-term goals (Pousa & Mathieu, 2010). Preenen et al's (2014) research indicated that organisational cultures that are competitive tend to stimulate performance-approach goal orientations in their line managers, but this external focused strategy may easily result in reduced internal human capital development, which in the end undermines an organisation's competitive strategy.

Line managers who work in organisations that have learning organisation cultures are more likely to coach (Beattie, 2006). Silverman (2003) highlighted that line

managers who perceive themselves to be disadvantaged in organisations that support workplace learning, are likely to try and defend their skill, knowledge and understanding to protect the influence and status that gives them. Silverman (2003) also suggested that if organisations encourage continuous learning and development among employees, the employees will begin to question the way in which line managers behave. This is a good thing for the organisation, but some line managers may not like it, and some organisational cultures may not be compatible with this.

Value articulation

Ellstrom (2012) concluded that the meaning of managerial support for learning and development in the workplace to a large extent depends on how the line managers understand their mission and tasks as line managers. Therefore, the articulation of values and directions by senior managers concerning the importance of managerial attention to issues of learning and development appear to be an important condition for developing organisations into environments for both productive work and learning.

Organisation type, size and structure

McGuire et al (2008) found that organisation type was a significant predictor of the importance that line managers attach to training and development. The study highlighted that line managers working in multinational organisations attached greater importance on training and development than those working in local or nationally owned organisations. McGuire et al (2008) argued that this could be because multinational organisations are likely to have more sophisticated training and development policies, structures and practices, they generally invest more in training and development than other types of organisations, and they are also more likely to have implemented a devolved human resource management strategy.

Organisation size also affects the effectiveness of line managers (Schwenk and Shrader, 1993). Page et al (2003) found that larger organisations provide a degree of support and reinforcement that is seen as improving line manager's ability to be effective. Industry (e.g., manufacturing vs service) has also been shown to alter what a line manager needs to do in order to be effective (Brush & Chaganti, 1998).

Ashton (2004) studied the impact of organisational structure on the availability of the support and feedback required for learning. This research showed that the

availability of support for learning is less tightly determined by the hierarchical design of the organisation and more to do with the skills of managers and the quality of their relationships with subordinates. Nevertheless, decisions about the design of the organisation still have an impact on the quality of support for learning. For example, organisational decisions about the relative importance of learning, and where authority lies for the management of the learning process, also have a significant impact on the support available for the learner.

The significance of the project-based company

Collings & Mellahi's (2009) study of strategic talent management argued the importance of deploying HR practices that are appropriate to the context of the organisation. Keegan et al (2012) argued that project orientation is an important and frequent contextual condition that deserves more HRM research attention. Similarly, Huemann et al (2007) found that HRM research pays most attention to routine organisations with stable structures and neglects projects as a new working form and the specific implications of project-oriented work for HRM.

Many multinational companies have shifted toward operating as project-oriented companies, adopting temporary organisational formats to deal with an increasingly complex environment through projects (Popaitoon & Siengthai, 2014). "Management by Projects" is considered as the organisational strategy of the project-oriented company. The company applies temporary organisations such as projects and programs to perform business processes, when appropriate (Huemann, 2010). According to Keegan et al (2012) project-oriented companies are generally organised in a matrix structure where the function and project organisations exist alongside each other, employees are housed in the line organisation for administrative purposes, and projects are resourced from the function as and when needed. Project participants can also find themselves caught between the command and control structures at project and at line/functional level (Keegan et al, 2012). While day-to-day work is carried out and supervised by the project management, longer term development is often supported by the function (Keegan et al, 2012).

Project-based structures seem to favour an increasingly HR-oriented line management function since line managers can be seen to a greater extent as managers of a "pool of project workers", with responsibilities for their allocation

in projects, competence development, appraisal and long-term career development (Bredin & Söderlund, 2007). Because co-workers perform most of their technical activities in projects rather than in the line, line managers become important managers of human resources instead of technical specialists and technical problem-solvers (Bredin & Söderlund, 2010). Bredin & Söderlund's (2011) study suggested that project-based line managers have prominent roles in HRM, but due to their need to balance the HRM and technological orientations, they wish for an integrated support and collaboration with HR specialists.

Bredin & Söderlund (2007) identified particular challenges for line managers supporting subordinate employees' development in project-based organisations. First, in a project-based context, a career is built on a series of projects. An individual in a project-based setting has to "take on the responsibility for the acquisition of the competencies demanded and of his or her professional development to keep employable". These particular developments of individual responsibilities should influence the role of the line management function in managing the relationship to these "professional" project workers with greater responsibility for their own development, competence and "employability" (Bredin & Söderlund, 2007). Second, projectification tends to create an organisation with a more short-term horizon where action focus is emphasised (Bredin & Söderlund, 2007). Bakker et al (2013) argued that project teams with a short time frame focus more on the immediate task than on project learning and reflection. This aspect of project-based organisations affects the possibilities to handle long-term development of individuals. It seems that the responsibility for long-term development is more or less left up to the individuals to handle. Indeed, in a project-based setting, the only people with a full overview of the individuals' work and development possibilities on a long-term basis are most likely the individuals themselves (Bredin & Söderlund, 2007).

2.13 Task factors

The A-M-O model is premised on the idea that organisational interests are best served by an HR system that attends to employees' interests, namely their skill requirements, motivations the quality of their job (Collings & Mellahi, 2009). Baldwin & Magjuka (1997) contended that line managers' performance in a given task can often be explained using three interrelated mechanisms:

- They are **able** to do so (they can do the job because they possess the necessary skills and knowledge);
- They have the **motivation** to do so (they will do the job because they want to and are adequately rewarded for their behaviour); and
- Their working environment provides the **opportunity**—that is, the support and avenues necessary to enable the desired behaviour.

For the purpose of this current study task factors are those factors that enable, motivate and provide the opportunity for line managers to engage in activities that support subordinate employees' development:

- Ability is defined here as the competencies necessary for line managers to successfully support subordinate employees' development activities.
- Motivation is defined as the line manager's desire and willingness to engage in subordinate employees' development activities.
- Opportunity is the support and avenues necessary to enable line managers to engage in subordinate employees' development activities. This means having the right level of authority to act, clear boundaries, and the ability to refine and adapt work processes to enable performers to operate more efficiently. Opportunity also includes the availability of resources such as technology, process design, time, finance, and empowerment.

2.13.1 Ability

Line managers who lack appropriate knowledge and skills may not be able to perform effectively. Indeed, Parker & Griffin (2011) suggested that knowledge and skills may moderate the engagement-performance link. Schuler et al (2011) asserted that there exists a "knowledge-doing" gap that prevents line managers implementing actions, even though they might know that they are the right things

to do. Hyman & Cunningham (1998) were concerned over whether line managers and line managers are sufficiently competent to take on demanding roles required under change programmes, and the difficulties in attempting to transfer an HR vision, which is senior management-led, down to the line. McGovern et al (1997) suggested that low HRM competencies of line managers are a significant constraint on effective devolution of HR responsibilities to line managers. Line managers' skills and competencies in HRM practices are limited and a lack of training in this area will undoubtedly affect a line manager's effectiveness (McGuire et al, 2008). Bos-Nehles' (2010) findings suggested that the more competencies that line managers have, the more effectively they implement HR practices and the more desire they have to perform HR practices effectively.

According to Gennard & Kelly (1997) many companies tend to promote line managers for their technical and engineering skills regardless of their business and people management competencies. Line managers generally are either old pros who have been judged as lacking competence for higher levels of responsibility, or they are younger people who are making their transition from doing to managing. Additionally, people often become line managers not by working through others but by being an individual contributor (Hunt & Weintraub, 2011). Often these line managers lack the knowledge and skill required to develop the productive capabilities of their subordinate employees (Livingston 2003). Renwick (2003) interviewed line managers on their experiences in handling HR work that has been devolved to them and found that although the line appreciate that HR work is a specialist area, they (the line) feel that they can still "do it", and are keen to demonstrate their skills in it, whether their skills in it are imaginary or real. Renwick (2003) suggested that it could be argued that they are making HR work seem mentally a simple common-sense exercise, even though their lived experience of doing it is perhaps that it is not.

Silverman (2003) argued that in organisations where people have traditionally been promoted into management positions on the basis of their "hard" skills (e.g. technical knowledge) as opposed to their "soft" people management skills, it is possible that there will be further development required for these line managers before the notion of the line manager as developer of their own staff is realistic. The CIPD Learning and Development Survey (2007) found that 44% of respondents believed that line managers were not very effective in relation to

learning and development. Despite this, half of respondents only trained a minority of line managers to support learning and development, and one in ten reported that none of their line managers were trained in this area. Few respondents trained their line managers to coach. Two-thirds trained only a minority and 15% didn't train any line managers to coach.

It is clear from the research literature that there are some specific underlying skills that determine a line manager's ability and expertise to successfully support subordinate development activities. This section will focus on the coaching skills and behaviours that align with the line manager as coach, which was identified previously in Chapter 2.6 as the most common role for a line manager supporting subordinate employees' development.

Gilley et al (2010) looked at those interpersonal skills that would be most influential on a line manager's use of coaching. They found that a line manager's abilities to motivate others, encourage growth and development, communicate properly, and exhibit skills to perform the job were the greatest predictors of a line manager's use of coaching in the workplace. Hunt & Weintraub (2011) set out the competencies of an effective coaching manager: demonstrates self-awareness; promotes learning among his or her team members; is an effective communicator; is accessible; demonstrates effective listening; and, creates a trusting environment.

Gregory & Levy (2011) studied the variables that impact line manager-employee coaching relationships and found that line managers can help nurture high quality relationships by leading with individual consideration, creating a positive feedback environment, building trust and demonstrating empathy. Rich (1998) identified coaching as a multidimensional activity consisting of three types of specific behaviours: positive feedback, role modelling, and trust. Rich (1998) found that positive, verbal feedback is important because everyone has a need to feel appreciated and recognised. Because coaches develop skills, line managers should strive to observe and then provide feedback on the specific skills or behaviours of each subordinate. Recognizing appropriate behaviour is an empowering line manager action in that it gives subordinates confidence that they are approaching their job in the correct manner, and thus have the skills to succeed. Rich (1998) also found that effective coaches are role models who

proactively set a positive example through their own behaviour. There are many ways for a line manager to be a role model to his or her subordinates but in general, role modelling involves never asking subordinates to do things that the line manager would not do her or himself. Finally, effective coaching occurs in an environment of mutual respect and trust between the line manager and subordinate. A line manager creates such an environment by demonstrating honesty, reliability and competence, and also by showing genuine concern about the needs of the subordinates through listening and maintaining open, two-way channels of communication. Rich (1998) found that the positive effects of the other two coaching constructs (feedback and role modelling) are likely to be enhanced when these behaviours are exhibited by a line manager who is trusted.

McLean et al (2005) argued that effective coaching is reflected in four aspects of managerial behaviour. First, line manager as coach should communicate openly with others (including subordinates and peers). Second, line manager as coach needs to take a team approach instead of an individual approach to tasks. Third, line manager as coach tends to value people over tasks instead of the other way around. Fourth, line manager as coach should accept the ambiguous nature of the working environment. Finally, coaching is used for the purpose of developing employees' expertise and subsequently improving performance. Peterson & Little (2005) recommended several other factors should be added to McLean et al's (2005) list of effective coaching behaviours: such as developing a partnership, effective listening skills, and providing feedback, as well as knowledge of techniques for facilitating development. Amy (2008) found that the ability of a line manager to communicate with the employees is a highly important factor in stimulating learning processes. The study also shows that line managers who are not enthusiastic and interested in communicating with their staff are obstacles to learning. Gilley et al's (2010) study of the characteristics of managerial coaching revealed the practices that are deemed symptomatic of managerial coaching, specifically and in order of importance, are the abilities to 1) motivate others, 2) help employees grow, and 3) communicate.

Orth et al (1990) argued that coaching managers must also have two types of analytical skills: They must be able to identify opportunities for employees to expand their capabilities and improve performance, and they must be able to determine when coaching is the action needed to help employees improve

performance and/or expand their capabilities. The process of deciding when coaching is or is not needed essentially entails analysis of the factors influencing an employee's performance.

Graham et al (1994) evaluated coaching skills using data collected from line managers' subordinates and found that successful coaches were those who were good communicators, were perceptive, could set clear expectations for their employees, could see the big picture, went out of their way to seek rewards for their employees, gave useful advice, and had good people skills. These line managers were constantly in touch with their staff and their professional development needs. Graham et al (1994) concluded that the findings from this research supported the need for a positive, trusting relationship between employee and line manager, and suggested that effective line managers provide observational, analytical, interviewing and feedback skills.

Kim et al (2013) found that managerial coaching mainly occurs in one-to-one conversations and applies active listening and questioning as well as constructive feedback for improving employee work and organisation relevant issues. According to Grant (2010) good verbal communication skills lie at the very heart of the coaching conversation: coaches need to be skilled at developing rapport in order to engage in collaborative goal-setting, whilst facilitating solution-focused thinking and enhancing motivation for change. In managerial coaching, the line manager is often a partner in figuring out and implementing the strategy and may or may not know more than the person being coached (Peterson & Little, 2005). In this kind of coaching, there is a strong emphasis on the coach as a facilitator, as highlighted by McLean et al, (2005), who is most effective by listening and drawing out insights rather than providing answers directly. Wenzel (2000) found that line managers who were skilled at building relationships and leading courageously were rated by others as the most effective coaches. Two other abilities - analyse issues and listening - also contributed to effectiveness but were not found to be main factors.

Noer's (2005) Triangle Coaching Model conceptualized the coaching process as the dynamic interaction of three behavioural dimensions: assessing, challenging and supporting.

Assessing Dimension: Skills for measurement and goal setting	Solution-focused thinking
	Planning, previewing and anticipating
	Drawing out insights
	Analysing issues
	Seeing the big picture
	Reviewing, debriefing and reflecting
Challenging Dimension: Skills for stimulating the employee to confront obstacles, re-conceptualise issues, and move forward with self-reliance	Setting clear expectations/goal setting
	Confronting issues
	Focusing and shaping
	Giving feedback
	Facilitating action
	Empowering
	Motivating
Supporting Dimension: Skills for creating an interpersonal context that facilitates trust, openness, respect and understanding	Communicating
	Listening
	Inquiring
	Promoting a learning climate
	Building relationships
	Creating an environment of trust
	Collaborating, negotiating with peers to create opportunities for Employee Development

Table 2.3: Coaching skills summarised into a framework based on the Noer (2005) Triangle Coaching Model

This model is particularly useful as it was developed for training line managers in coaching and helping skills, and with the specific intention that it could be applied across cultures.

- Assessing – using analytical processes that lead to measurement and goal-setting. The behavioural components are data gathering, gap analysis, goal-setting, and measurement/feedback.
- Challenging – stimulating the employee being coached to confront obstacles, re-conceptualise issues, and move forward with self-reliance. The behavioural components are confronting, focusing/shaping, re-framing and empowering/energising.
- Supporting – creating an interpersonal context that facilitates trust, openness, respect and understanding. The behavioural components are attending, inquiring, reflecting, affirming, and airing.

The skills noted above can be summarised into a framework based on the Noer (2005) Triangle Coaching Model, as depicted in Table 2.3.

2.13.2 Motivation

According to Ryan & Deci (2000) to be motivated means to be moved to do something. A line manager who feels no impetus or inspiration to act is thus characterized as unmotivated, whereas a line manager who is energized or activated toward an end is considered motivated.

All too often organisations invest time, effort and money into developing the coaching skills of their line managers only to find that, despite initial high levels of enthusiasm, they fail to adopt the taught coaching skills in the workplace and end up slipping back into old command-and-control leadership behaviour patterns (Grant & Hartley, 2013). McGovern et al (1997) argued that the involvement of line managers in Employee Development activities is often a matter of personal motivation rather than institutional pressures. McGovern et al (1997) asked line managers to ‘rank in order what motivates you to be involved in personnel activities’. Personal motivation emerged as the largest category of “first ranked” responses for virtually all of the organisations studied. McComb (2012) contended that it is important to ensure that motivational as well as competence elements are considered in the design and implementation of a coaching culture in their organisation. Line managers must be motivated to exhibit coaching

behaviours, but Heslin et al (2006) found that line managers often differ substantially in their inclination to coach subordinates.

In Self-Determination Theory (SDT) Deci & Ryan (1989) distinguished between different types of motivation based on being regulated by controlled reasons and autonomous reasons:

- Controlled regulation pertains to feeling pressured to perform a behaviour or pursue a goal. There are two types of controlled regulation: external and introjected regulation. In the case of external regulation, people engage in an activity or pursue a goal to meet external demands, avoid punishment, or obtain a reward. Introjected regulation involves individuals pressuring themselves by bolstering their goal pursuit with threats of shame and guilt for poor performance and promises of self-aggrandizement and pride for good performance.
- Autonomous regulation involves acting with a full sense of volition or willingness. Two bases for autonomous regulation have been differentiated: identified motivation and intrinsic motivation. Identified motivation concerns the personal endorsement of the behavioural regulation or goal because the activity or goal is of personal value. In the case of intrinsic motivation, people find the activity or goal to be interesting and enjoyable.

Type of regulation		Examples
Controlled	External	Accountability, performance incentives, return on investment, social exchange.
	Introjected	
Autonomous	Identified	Need for purpose, need for autonomy, need for relatedness, need for competence, intrinsic motivation.
	Intrinsic	

Table 2.4: Different types of motivation based on being regulated by controlled reasons and autonomous reasons

Accountability

According to Sikora & Ferris (2014) it appears that line manager accountability is key to HR implementation. When senior managers in an organisation value

accountability for the firm's HR practices, then politically-astute line managers appear more likely to implement those practices. Conversely, if their organisations don't hold them accountable for implementing HR practices, then it appears likely that line managers' HR implementation efforts may decrease. Kraines (2001) argued that line managers must be accountable for stewardship of human resources – improving resources, increasing their value, and guarding them against depletion. Therefore, line managers must be accountable for knowing the potential of their employees, and for assessing and communicating what those employees can do to prepare themselves for larger roles. However, McGovern et al (1997) found that fewer than half of line managers who were surveyed considered successful implementation of personnel policies to be an “important” or “very important” factor in their own performance appraisals. Additionally, Gratton et al (1999) found that there were no specific key HRM performance indicators or any other performance criteria regarding line managers' role in HRM. Additionally, Carter (2013) raised important questions about accountability: 1) on what criteria are the facilitative learning skills of line managers judged and by whom? 2) how are line managers deemed competent to effectively facilitate informal ongoing work related learning? 3) What consequences might arise for learners, line managers and the organisation if informal learning activities are recorded and monitored?

Performance incentives

Beattie (2002) suggested that a key factor influencing the propensity of the line manager to support subordinate employees' development is the performance management system - line managers receive little or no acknowledgement of their role in developing subordinates. More specifically, line managers are rewarded for possessing skill, knowledge and understanding, and not for disseminating that skill, knowledge and understanding to their employees (Silverman, 2003). This impacts on the way in which priorities at work are determined and how effort is directed.

Return on investment

McGovern (1999) argued that line managers have limited incentive to spend much of their time on subordinate employees' development activities because they perceive that they will gain little or that there will not be a return on investment. Schuler et al (2011) asserted that line managers perhaps see these activities as less

important than managing the business because they require such a long-term perspective. Zeni et al (2013) suggested that line managers have finite resources available and that redirecting their resources to increase support to employees' development comes at the cost of diminishing resources available for other activities. Pousa & Mathieu (2010) performed an exploratory study in which they compared a line manager's motivation to coach in terms of Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory. In this case, they found that those organisations that focus on short-term goals have line managers who are less likely to be motivated to coach and more likely to be motivated to display directive managerial behaviours. This relationship was confounded when extrinsic rewards were in use. Conversely, those organisations that focus on long-term results and support managerial behaviours that focus on long-term development have line managers who are more likely to be motivated to display coaching behaviours. Jackson & Lindsay (2010) argued that because organisations have multiple, competing objectives, line managers may be rewarded for pursuing performance objectives that interfere with learning objectives. However, Hall (2006) suggested that line managers who take Employee Development seriously are more likely to attract good people, to produce a workplace with high morale and high standards, and to maintain a spirit of continuous improvement – that's good for employees and good for their line managers. According to the Learning Network Theory (van der Krogt, 1998), the role of the managers depends on the action theory of the line managers. The more line managers think that the professional development of employees is functional for reducing their own problems, the more they will exert influence either directly or indirectly on the learning paths of employees (van der Krogt, 1998). Cohen's (2013) research shows that for many line managers, the motivation to facilitate and promote learning for their employees is that it allows the employee and their team to improve efficiencies, achieve output and to reach targets or to simply get the work at hand completed. However, other line managers drive an expansive learning environment, through an energetic and deliberate creation of learning opportunities for their employees - beyond immediate goal orientation. For them, Employee Development and the 'development beyond the role' approach sit squarely within their management role. Thus, for many line managers, their immediate focus is on the development of their employees so that they are not only able to manage and perform within their current role but also extend their skill sets. This in turn makes the line

manager's role significantly easier. Whittaker & Marchington (2003) also indicated that when line managers want to perform HR tasks and realize that this gives them certain advantages, it is expected that they will perform their HR tasks more effectively.

Social exchange

It's hard for line managers to be committed to the learning and development of their staff if their boss isn't (Hutchinson & Purcell, 2007). The relationship between line managers and their own managers was the biggest variable explaining line managers' own levels of affective commitment and job satisfaction (Hutchinson & Purcell, 2003). According to social learning theory, participation in an activity (supporting subordinate employees' development) is the result of a line manager mimicking the behaviour of senior management. Noe et al (1997) argued that a line manager observes the behaviour of senior managers and the subsequent outcomes that result from the behaviour. The line manager mimics the senior managers' behaviour, expecting the same or similar behaviours – which serve as reinforcers and can encourage or discourage the behaviour. While exploring Organisational Support Theory (OST), Shannock & Eisenberger (2006) considered the unique position of line managers as both recipients of support from above and providers of support below them and examined factors that might lead line managers to treat subordinates supportively. OST supposes that to determine the organisation's readiness to reward increased work effort and to meet socio-emotional needs, employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being. Perceived organisational support (POS) is also valued as assurance that aid will be available from the organisation when it is needed to carry out one's job effectively and to deal with stressful situations (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Shannock & Eisenberger (2006) surveyed full-time retail employees and their line managers to investigate relationships of line managers' perceived organisational support with subordinates' perceptions of support from their line managers. Their findings suggested that line managers who feel supported by the organisation reciprocate with more supportive treatment for subordinates. Thus, the organisation's supportive treatment of line managers may have value for increasing the performance of subordinates. Social exchange theory tells us that a reciprocal relationship usually exists between employees' perceptions of the degree of support the organisation provides to meet their expectations and their

own behaviour. This can be seen in psychological contracts. One powerful element in this contract is the relationship with the line manager and their leadership behaviour, what is called 'leader-member exchange' (Purcell & Hutchinson 2007). Another is employees' experiences of various HR practices implemented by the employer, such as career development, learning and development, performance management, and many others (Hutchinson & Purcell, 2007).

Gibb (2003) asked what happens to the line manager as developer when the line managers are asked to make decisions about the development of staff who might in a few months be competing for that line manager's job. McGuire et al (2008) studied line manager's personal values as predictors of importance attached to training and development. The results suggested that line managers will not champion training and development if they are fearful of the achievements of their subordinates and uncertain about their own capabilities. Hunt & Weintraub (2011) discussed the consequences of a mismatch between the career stage of the employee and the career stage of the line manager. A more senior employee will probably not wish to have his or her technical judgement questioned but may be open to coaching on strategic or political issues. Unfortunately, a younger line manager may not have much to offer in this regard. Likewise, a new employee may have a great need for coaching. However, a line manager, caught up in the advancement stage of his own career, may perceive that he or she has less time and energy for coaching than the new employee would like.

Need for purpose

Morrison et al (2007) argued that in order to improve line manager engagement, organisations should not rely entirely on extrinsic forms of motivation, such as incentives or regulation. The impetus must come from line managers viewing work as being concerned with something that is bigger than they are. Kerns (2013) argued that line managers need to know where things are going and that their work is meaningful. Additionally, Warhurst (2013) tested line manager's beliefs and intentions regarding their role in initiating workplace learning in the contemporary context of cuts and change and found that strong developmental intentions were clearly dominant in the line managers' reported beliefs about their managerial role. In explaining their prioritisation of development, it was seen that

the line managers primarily invoked the contribution to organisational survival and growth.

Other needs satisfaction

Van den Broeck et al (2008) examined the role of basic need satisfaction, as defined within SDT, in the relationship between job demands, job resources and engagement. The results of this study suggested that the frustration of one's basic psychological needs - autonomy, relatedness and competence - is likely to undermine motivation and to prevent one from being energized psychologically. Van den Broeck et al (2010) later confirmed that satisfaction of the three needs related positively to job satisfaction and vigour (i.e., the main component of work engagement). These findings are consistent with SDT, which assumes that the support of one's basic psychological needs stimulates optimal motivation, both in terms of the quantity and the quality of motivation, and engenders a sense of psychological energy (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

- **Autonomy** – the urge for freedom of choice and control of one's own destiny. Deci et al (1989) found that acknowledging their line managers' perspectives, providing relevant information in a non-controlling way, offering choice, and encouraging self-initiation rather than pressuring line managers to behave in specified ways, was associated with line managers being more satisfied with their jobs, having a higher level of trust in corporate management, and displaying other positive work-related attitudes. Kuvaas et al (2014) found that line managers need to perceive that they have autonomy and discretion to take individual and local needs into account when implementing HR and that the HR practices are perceived as assisting them in their duties. Kuvaas et al (2014) argued that many line managers are already personally motivated to be involved with HR, but by increasing their perceptions of enabling HR practices, they may become even more motivated to take their responsibility for HR and people issues more seriously.
- **Relatedness** – wanting to interact, be connected to, and experience caring for others. Line managers may be motivated to engage in support of subordinate employees' development if they have care and concern for the welfare and growth of their employees (van den Broeck et al, 2010). Line managers are most often motivated by the need for employees to meet some standard of conduct or performance, as well as the personal satisfaction provided by

helping employees do well in their work (Gilley et al, 2010). The behaviour, skills, and attitude of the coachee is also likely to have an effect on whether a line manager will take on the role of coach (Minter & Thomas, 2000). London et al (1999) showed that higher performing individuals may receive more support from line managers, which in turn encourages them seeking more feedback. This may create a self-fulfilling cycle of continuous growth and development for motivated and good performers.

- **Competence** – seeking to experience mastery. According to the Harter's Competence Motivation Theory (1978) line managers will gravitate to tasks in which they perceive competence and avoid areas where success is hit or miss and a sense of accomplishment is lacking. Similarly, de Jong et al (1999) contended that untrained line managers may avoid a coaching role due to their discomfort with it. Jeon & Kim (2012) investigated how task factors influence learning in the workplace and found that workers tend to be motivated to improve knowledge and skills through learning by doing when faced with new and challenging tasks and situations.

Intrinsic motivation

According to Ankli & Palliam (2012) line managers are most resourceful and innovative when they feel motivated largely as a result of their interest, their inner satisfaction, and challenges of the work itself. Konrad (1997) argued that if line managers find the activities necessary for effective job performance to be enjoyable, then they may engage in those activities whether or not the organisation rewards them for doing so. Line managers have the ability to spend more time on activities they consider important and less time on those they find unimportant. Line managers can also exhibit discretion regarding their choices into whether and how to implement particular HRM practices (Brewster et al, 2013). Being able to identify which tasks line managers consider to be desirable and which they consider undesirable will help organisations to identify areas of the line manager's job requiring additional monitoring or incentives to motivate effective performance (Konrad et al, 1997).

2.13.3 Opportunity

Line managers' willingness to support subordinate employees' development is to an extent dependent on the opportunities for action that the organisation provides to them (Leisink & Knies, 2011).

Organisational support

Heraty & Morley (1995) discussed the consequences of a lack of organisational support for line managers in their HRD responsibility. The relationship between line managers and their own managers is important and Hutchinson & Purcell (2003) showed how this was the biggest variable explaining line managers' own levels of affective commitment and job satisfaction. Noe & Wilk (1993) found that employees' perceptions of the supportiveness of their work environment influenced their rate of participation in development activities. A supportive climate positively influenced participation, whereas situational constraints negatively influenced future plans to participate in development activities. Noe et al (1997) argued that the theory of reasoned action may explain how social support in organisations influences a line manager's decision to participate in supporting Subordinate employees' development activities. The theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Azjen, 1975) proposed that both a line manager's attitude towards a behaviour (supporting subordinate employees' development) and perceptions of the wants and wishes of important others (senior management) determine behavioural intentions. Taking a psychological contract perspective, it may be that when organisations meet their obligations to support line managers in their work (of supporting subordinate employees' development) this is seen by line managers as a reason to reciprocate by engaging in support of subordinate employees' development (Kidd & Smewing, 2001). Noe et al (1997) contended that the support of senior management may tip the scale as to whether a line manager supports subordinate employees' development. Vera & Crossan (2004) studied the impact of top management leadership style on organisational learning and found that top executives need to be both transformational and transactional. Transformational leadership best suits situations involving a change to the existing order of institutionalized learning (the firm's strategy and routines, for example). Transactional leadership, on the other hand, is appropriate for situations involving current learning and its institutionalization, reinforcement, and refinement. Rafferty & Griffin (2006) distinguished between supportive

leadership and developmental leadership as dimensions of transformational leadership. Supportive leadership was defined as occurring when leaders express concern for, and take account of, followers' needs and preferences when making decisions. Developmental leadership behaviours include coaching followers, identifying appropriate training courses for followers to undertake and encouraging followers to develop their job-related skills and abilities. Rafferty & Griffin (2006) found that developmental leadership displayed significantly stronger relationships with job satisfaction, affective commitment to the organisation and role-breadth self-efficacy than did supportive leadership. So it would seem that some of the behaviours expected of line managers regarding their role in subordinate development would also be applicable for leaders to exhibit with regard to supporting and developing line managers. This point was validated by Southall's (2014) finding that (senior/middle) managers play an essential role in inspiring engagement in subordinates.

Vera & Crossan (2004) acknowledged that line managers lack guidance on how their actions facilitate or hinder learning. If HR devolution is not accompanied by clear policies and procedures regarding the use of HR practices and the division of responsibilities and authority, line managers become confused about their roles (Nehles et al, 2006). However, Bos-Nehles (2010) found that more and better policies do not lead to more effective implementation of HR practices. Tansky & Cohen (2001) studied the relationship between organisational support, Employee Development and organisational commitment. It was found that managers not only need to feel confident in their roles as coaches but also must be satisfied with the Employee Development process in the organisation.

The relationships and interactions between HR and line management also have a significant impact on supports and barriers for line involvement in HRM (Qadeer et al, 2011). Perry & Kulik (2008) observed that 'turf' issues may prevent the HR function from providing real tangible support for the line. Renwick & MacNeil (2002) contended that in some cases HR managers have not helped line managers to complete HR work as much as they could by providing training for them, or in generally offering them support and advice. Renwick & MacNeil (2002) were also concerned whether HR managers will give the necessary support to the line in developing employees and their careers, and that they will work in partnership with them on it either. However, in the absence of HR taking the initiative, an

HR-line partnership is unlikely to develop, as line managers are generally reluctant to ask HR for help (Bond & Wise 2003). Renwick (2003) found that a frustration for line managers was that they needed HR advice, but when it came it was often seen as unhelpful to them as line managers felt they were being “policed” by the rule book.

Brandl et al (2009) found differences in the perceptions of the importance of HR duties across the managerial hierarchy. They speculated whether this means that senior managers place more emphasis on HR duties because they are less involved in administrative tasks, whereas it is more difficult for line managers because of their other practical obligations. Whittaker & Marchington (2003) speculated whether this could be because senior managers receive better support from HR specialists than lower level line managers.

Gilbert et al (2011) focused on the HR role of line managers and investigated the role stressors that may accompany it, in particular on two role stressors that can occur as a consequence of the nature of this relationship: HR role ambiguity and HR role overload. Their results showed that both the level of support received from the HR department and the level of HR competencies possessed by the line manager can influence perceptions of HR role ambiguity and overload. Kuvaas et al (2014) found a positive relationship between line managers’ perceptions of enabling HR and their perceptions of receiving high quality HR training, which indicated that better HR training can increase line managers’ perceptions of enabling HR.

Gilbert et al (2011) also found that a situation of high task demands combined with a non-supportive organisational environment and low personal qualities results in a worst-case scenario regarding perceived role stressors, was not supported in their study. It seems that if an extensive devolution of HR tasks is combined with a high level of support from the HR department, the line manager will welcome the variety of HR tasks and consider it an enrichment of his job, or a means to achieve objectives rather than an extra burden on his time.

Role dissonance and ambiguity

Role conflict, e. g. conflict between operational and developmental duties, can also affect line manager engagement. As Kelly (1985) noted; “I can’t suddenly change my role as a line manager”. Line managers are unclear about their HR

role and responsibilities. According to McConville (2006) line managers can perceive role dissonance and ambiguity when their role is not clearly defined. Often, employees are confronted with unclear information about role expectations or incongruity of the different role expectations. The former situation is referred to as “role ambiguity”, the latter as “role conflict”. Role incumbents will respond to these so-called role stressors with negative attitudes and behaviour, and subsequently bad performance in their role (Gilbert et al, 2011). Role strain, in contrast to role conflict, is an exposure to demands that require more time, energy, and commitment than one can provide (O'Driscoll & Beehr, 1994). McLean et al (2005) argued that occupying the dual role of manager and coach seems to be a source of stress, but it is uncertain as to the extent to which the stress results from extra time demands and from contradictory role expectations. Another aspect of role conflict is the expectation of subordinates compared with the understanding of line managers relative to what a coach should do (McLean et al, 2005).

De Jong et al (1999) contended where line managers do not reflect a belief in HRD in their operational role the impact of HRD is likely to be reduced. According to Hutchinson & Purcell (2007) not all line managers are equally convinced that this is a fundamental part of their job. This was confirmed by the CIPD learning and development survey (2007), which showed that almost a quarter (23%) of respondents felt that line managers didn't take their learning and development responsibilities seriously. The CIPD learning and development survey (2007) showed that line managers perceived these activities as “optional” rather than essential. Martins (2007) contended that some line managers in the manufacturing/engineering industry lack commitment to their HRM role because they believe that the function of managing people is a personnel/HRM specialist function which ought to be left to personnel/HRM professionals, like that of engineering, which requires technical competencies as opposed to people management competencies, should be left to engineers. However, Whittaker & Marchington (2003) found that line managers claimed to be satisfied with the HR responsibilities that have been devolved to them and are keen to take on activities that relate explicitly to the development of their team. Maxwell & Watson (2006) considered line managers' understanding of their HRD roles and responsibilities, the key HRD activities they engage in, and the challenges they face in relation to their HRD roles. It concludes that line managers appear to have embraced their HRD roles, with support from HRD professionals.

How work is organised

Sambrook (2005) found that the way work was organized, including work patterns, performance targets and sheer work load, created barriers to learning and developing learning environments.

The increased attention paid to Employee Development on and through the job inevitably throws greater weight on line managers as developers of others (Mumford, 1993). HR responsibilities are often devolved to line managers without any reduction in their other duties (Brewster & Larsen, 2000). This places considerable pressure on their capacity to implement HRM next to their operational responsibilities. The pressure of the operational tasks and the increasing HR responsibilities put excessive demands on line managers' time and energy, and might result in role overload for line managers (McConville, 2006). McComb (2012) contended that if line managers are feeling overloaded with their responsibilities they might not have the mental and emotional resources to invest in learning or applying coaching skills. Van Ruysseveldt et al (2011) found that at high levels of workload, line managers might be more "pinned down" to immediate work goal realisation. While they focus on strictly productive behaviours, the time needed for behaviours that are not immediately productive gradually shrinks. Also, high job demands such as workload may disturb task regulation, leading to obstruction of intended learning behaviour, causing line managers to lapse into automated behaviour. At high levels of workload, line managers might experience a greater need to lean on existing, routine behaviour patterns to cope with work problems, leaving the learning potential of a challenging work situation underexploited. Pressure of short term imperatives may squeeze out HRD activities (Tsui, 1987). It's hard for line managers to be committed to the learning and development of their staff if their boss isn't, and if strong conflicting messages come from senior management concerning the priority of immediate performance targets (Hutchinson & Purcell, 2007). Employee Development may be viewed as less of a priority because of competing demands (Peterson & Little, 2005). Whittaker & Marchington (2003) suggested that line managers have many other pressing priorities than managing and developing the people working for them.

Hutchinson & Purcell (2007) added that line managers, for understandable reasons, are interested almost exclusively in the immediate needs of their section

and the relevant skill acquisition of their team members. McGovern et al (1997) found that line managers have little incentive to invest in development of their subordinates because it would have little impact on the line managers' immediate goals. While such activity might be of benefit to the organisation and to the individual it was not something which line managers found to be a priority. McGovern (1999) asked line managers to identify what they understood to be their key measures, or the key items for impressing superiors, and what the associated unwritten rules were for surviving or getting ahead within the organisation. Developing employees did not emerge in the list of unwritten rules or measurement priorities within any of the organisations studied. As a result, too much focus on short-term job-relevant learning and development can drive out consideration of longer-term career development. This short-range focus may result in people management that is fragmented, inconsistent and generally less effective (Perry & Kulik, 2008).

Line managers may thus experience a lack of time to perform all HR duties well (Maxwell & Watson, 2006). Ellstrom (2012) argued that when some managers mention a "lack of time" as a reason for not working with development-related issues this might indicate that these line managers do not prioritise development issues due to how they interpret their tasks or to a lack of knowledge and skills in supporting workplace learning and development. Hirsh et al (2004) found that line managers sometimes find it difficult to give their staff the individual time they needed.

Due to organisational restructuring, line managers often have a wider span of control, resulting in a larger amount of subordinates reporting to them than previously (McGovern et al, 1997). McGovern et al (1997) found that a wider span of control and larger numbers of staff reporting to them placed considerable pressure on the time which line managers could allow for people management activities. There were two aspects to this. First, line managers had less time to respond to day-to-day people management issues and secondly, line managers were reluctant to invest time in development of subordinates because of the opportunity costs of foregoing other activities. McGovern et al (1997) suggested that when organisations are "flattened", the softer elements of managerial roles are among the first to be squeezed out of day-to-day activities.

2.14 Individual factors

McGuire et al (2008) examined empirically the relationship between the personal values of line managers and the importance that they attach to training and development in the workplace. Their findings indicated that line managers who place strong emphasis on achievement, self-reliance, competence and self-respect are more likely to champion training and development in the workplace. Langelan et al's (2005) examination of whether individual differences make a difference to work engagement found that engaged line managers can be distinguished from their counterparts on the basis of their personality and temperament. It appears that levels of extraversion and mobility (the capacity to adapt to changing environments) matter.

Judge & Bono (2000) identified consistent associations between specific traits and the emergence of different line manager behaviours. Personality traits concerned with human agency, or one's ability to control their thoughts and emotions in order to actively interact with their environments are likely to lead to engagement (Hirschfeld & Thomas, 2008). Such traits include conscientiousness, positive affect, and proactive personality (Christian et al, 2011). Paglis & Green (2002) found several characteristics of the individual (such as internal locus of control and self-esteem) as an important source of a line manager's motivation for taking on difficult tasks at work and line managers' self-efficacy. Possessing an internal locus of control is expected to positively influence line managers' judgments about whether or not they can create meaningful change in their units. A low self-esteem line manager, then, may feel more anxious and self-critical about his chances for success when confronting leadership opportunities, compared to his high self-esteem counterpart.

Luthans et al (2006) studied personal resources - such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience - and found a link to work engagement. Paglis & Green (2002) studied how self-efficacy line manager engagement in difficult tasks at work. Self-efficacy is defined as an estimate of one's ability to orchestrate performance through successfully executing the behaviours that are required to produce desired outcomes (Bandura, 1977). It is partly on the basis of efficacy beliefs that line managers choose what challenges to undertake, how much effort to expend in the endeavour, how long to persevere in the face of obstacles and failures, and whether failures are motivating or demoralizing. The likelihood that

line managers will act on the outcomes they expect prospective performances to produce depends on their beliefs about whether or not they can produce those performances (Bandura, 2001). Paglis & Green (2002) found several features of the work context had influences on line managers' self-efficacy – these included organisational support, resource supply, job autonomy and leadership modelling of the expected behaviour. Chen et al (2001) found that accumulation of successes, as well as persistent positive experiences, augments self-efficacy.

Another type of personal resource, optimism, has been found to be important for engagement. This refers to the tendency to believe that one will generally experience good outcomes in life (Scheier & Carver, 1985). It is believed that optimistic employees strive for positive outcomes, and are likely to believe in their potential regardless of previous outcomes (Sweetman & Luthans, 2010). However, Xanthopoulou et al (2013) studied work engagement among employees facing emotional demands and found that optimistic employees may think that difficult interactions at work will be solved without significant personal effort, and therefore they do not stay engaged in their work. Related to this, Carter (2013) found that line managers often carry on the role of facilitating worker learning independently despite their experiences of limited acknowledgement or support from their own managers and from the organisation as a whole. Their ongoing interest, commitment and resilience to challenging circumstances are characteristics of their individual approaches and underpin their strategies for improving and sustaining their practices in facilitating worker learning.

Heslin et al (2006) looked at how an individual's implicit person theories (IPTs), which draw upon a person's perception of the malleability of personal attributes, affect one's willingness to help others. They found that those individuals who hold an "entity theory" that human attributes are innate and unalterable are less inclined to invest in helping others to develop and improve (coach), while individuals who hold the "incremental theory" that personal attributes can be developed are more likely to exhibit coaching behaviours. They went on to show that line managers' IPTs were able to predict employee evaluations of line managers' coaching skills, and those line managers who were persuaded (via self-persuasion) to sway their IPTs toward a more incrementally founded one were more willing to coach employees through instances of poor performance.

2.15 Literature gaps

The purpose of this literature review was to identify not only what has been studied, but also where any gaps in research may be. A gap in the literature is a research question relevant to a given domain that has not been answered adequately or at all in existing peer-reviewed scholarship.

A gap in the literature may emerge if the question has not been addressed in a given domain, although it may have been answered in a similar or related area, or the question has never been asked before, or the question has been asked and tested in peer-reviewed research, but the methods were either of questionable validity or had necessitated limited applicability of results.

Chapters 2.11 to 2.15 consolidated what previous researchers variously considered as factors facilitating or inhibiting line managers' engagement in support of employees' development. This chapter includes a more detailed review and critical appraisal of the other recent research that has taken a holistic view of these factors. This literature review included an analysis of contemporary researchers' recommendations for future research, and highlighted several uncultivated areas of particular relevance to the current study. These gaps encompass:

- A need to understand the organisational, task and individual factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for employees' development,
- A need to examine the potentially moderating effects of organisational factors that may impact line managers' ability/motivation/opportunity to be supportive of employees' development,
- A need to examine the implications for both organisations and line managers of Employee Development dynamics in project-oriented companies,
- A need to derive a clearer understanding of how to intervene to improve engagement at the level of the individual, the team, the business unit, and the organisation, and
- A need to obtain data from different perspectives to examine whether or not there is a variation in the perceptions regarding line managers' participation in Employee Development activities.

2.15.1 The need to understand the factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development:

According to Anderson (2013) further research is necessary into the factors that both encourage and inhibit managerial coaching. Sambrook (2005) argued that to answer the question “how is Employee Development encouraged, supported and facilitated in organisations?” future research needs to identify what HRD practitioners, line managers and other employees consider are the inhibiting and enhancing factors. Zeni et al (2013) also argued that more research needs to be conducted on the factors that facilitate or hinder supportive supervision. Gilbert et al (2011) reported that little research focuses on the topic of stressors in the HR role of line managers, and their antecedents.

In the context of this particular study Sambrook's (2005) work holds certain relevance. Sambrook (2005) set out to identify the factors inhibiting and enhancing work related learning. The research was conducted in two stages: the first stage employed qualitative methods to explore these issues in case studies in large organisations, analysing internal documents and conducting semi-structured interviews with senior managers, managers, HRD professionals and other employees (learners); the second stage involved a questionnaire survey targeted at senior HRD professionals, testing the case study findings. Sambrook (2005) identified factors that she categorised into four main themes – organisational, functional, individual, and pragmatic. Organisational factors included culture, structure, senior management support, organisation of work, work pressures, targets, and task versus learning orientation. Functional factors included HRD role clarity, understanding of HRD tasks and expertise. Individual factors included motivation, skills and confidence. Pragmatic factors included attitudes to development, lack of resources, lack of time, and lack of reward. While it was useful to identify the factors influencing learning - as identified by managers, learners and HRD professionals - no attempt was made to suggest how organisations address the barriers. Neither was there an examination of how the factors interact with each other. Sambrook (2005) recommended future research to establish, through statistical analyses, the possible connections, correlations, interactions and impacts of these factors.

Sikora & Ferris (2011) also considered individual and contextual/organisational factors, but in relation to line managers' implementation of HR practices. Sikora

& Ferris (2011) argued that an increased understanding of the factors that impact line manager HR practice implementation should help organisations to see which implementation activities are working best and also identify any gaps. Therefore, organisations can use this knowledge to improve performance outcomes. For example, if line managers are lacking in HR competencies, the organisation should work with those line managers to increase their abilities. Similarly, if performance incentives and accountability are lacking, then the organisation should focus on addressing these issues as they pertain to HR implementation activities.

Sikora & Ferris (2011) identified factors that they categorised into three main themes – individual, organisational, and HR practice. Although not specifically referring to A-M-O theory, Sikora & Ferris (2011) categorised line manager HR competencies, line manager motivation and line manager capacity as individual factors. The organisational factors measured in the Sikora & Ferris (2011) study included an organisational culture supportive of HR, HR/line manager relationship quality, line manager performance incentives, and line manager accountability. A third category of HR practice factors included HR practice appropriateness and HR practice effectiveness. The Sikora & Ferris (2011) study used data from only 57 line managers, from only one organisation in the not-for-profit sector in the USA. Sikora & Ferris (2011) used an exploratory factor analysis and multiple regression testing to show that the factors mentioned above had a significant impact in predicting line managers' HR practice implementation levels. They found that while both context/organisational and individual issues were important factors, the context/organisational factors appeared to be a slightly stronger predictor of line managers' HR implementation levels. Interestingly, two of the individual factors – the line managers' competence and capacity – seemed to play a role in determining their HR implementation activities, however motivation did not.

Bos-Nehles et al (2013) applied A-M-O theory to the HRM implementation effectiveness of line managers and asked whether line manager reluctance to perform HRM tasks might very well be an effect of inability, non-motivation, or a lack of opportunities to perform. Bos-Nehles et al (2013) carried out a multiple regression analysis on data collected through a survey in two organisations for a sample population of 174 line managers. Unlike the Sambrook (2005) and Sikora

& Ferris (2011) studies, the Bos Nehles et al (2013) study did not include measures of variables relating to organisational factors. It is arguable that these variable may be more critical in explaining line managers' engagement in HRM tasks.

Their results also showed that only ability had a positive significant effect on performance and that motivation and opportunity by themselves cannot directly influence HRM performance without the necessary the skills and knowledge to implement HRM practices on the work floor. Bos-Nehles et al (2013) considered that this result is clearly at odds with the general view expressed in the devolution literature - that line managers are not motivated to execute HRM responsibilities and thus implement them ineffectively (e.g. Harris et al, 2002; Whittaker & Marchington, 2003). Bos-Nehles et al (2013) explained that it could be that the line managers in their sample had been selected for a line management function because they were positively motivated toward HRM, or that they like performing HRM tasks because they find they have abilities in this area. Despite this, motivation had neither a significant direct nor a moderating effect on HRM implementation effectiveness. However, opportunity was found to strengthen the effect of ability on performance. The clearer and more supportive the policies and procedures provided to line managers are, the better the able ones implement HRM practices. They suggested that the effect of motivation on performance needs further consideration given that, in this study, the most motivated line managers are surprisingly perceived as the worst performers when it comes to HRM practices on the work floor.

The above-mentioned analysis draws attention to a variation in the items identified and tested by previous researchers as factors that encourage and inhibit line manager support for Employee Development. This indicates the need for the current study to explore other potential factors and avoid being under-specified or not completely exhaustive regarding such factors.

Sambrook (2005)			
Organisational factors	Functional factors	Individual factors	Pragmatic factors
Culture; structure; senior management support; organisation of work; work pressures; targets; task versus learning orientation	HRD role clarity; understanding of HRD tasks; expertise	Motivation; skills; confidence	Attitudes to development; lack of resources; lack of time; lack of reward
Sikora & Ferris (2011)			
Organisational factors	Individual factors	HR practice factors	
Organisational culture supportive of HR; HR/line manager relationship quality; line manager performance incentives; line manager accountability	Line manager HR competencies; line manager motivation; line manager capacity	Line manager perceived HR practice appropriateness; line manager perceived HR practice effectiveness	
Bos-Nehles et al (2013)			
Ability factors	Motivation factors	Opportunity factors	
Occupational self efficacy; training	Intrinsic motivation; identified regulation; amotivation; value added	Role overload; HR support services; HR support behaviour	

Table 2.5: Comparison of previous researchers' assemblage of factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development

2.15.2 The need to understand the individual factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development:

The studies mentioned in 2.16.1 above considered the influence of organisational and ability-motivation-factors (independent variables) on line managers' implementation level (the dependent variable). However, these studies did not consider the moderating effect that individual, demographic and contextual factors (independent variables) could have on organisational and ability-motivation-factors (dependent variables).

Sikora & Ferris (2011) suggested that research could examine whether there are factors unique to individual line managers which shape their HR practice implementation decisions. For example, are there line manager demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, etc., that can predict HR practice implementation?

2.15.3 The need to examine the potentially moderating effects of organisational factors that may impact line managers' ability/motivation/opportunity to be supportive of subordinate employees' development:

Ozcelik & Uyargil (2015) proposed that organisational factors can either foster or hinder opportunities provided for line managers in the work environment for HR related decision-making and hence, influence their knowledge, skills and motivation level in relation to effective HR implementation. Consequently, they recommended future research to determine whether organisation factors are positively associated with line managers' A-M-O. Bos-Nehles et al (2013) argued that when studying line managers' participation in HRM implementation, one clearly needs to take a range of organisational context variables into account. Bos-Nehles et al (2013) controlled for organisational context, as the organisations investigated differed by sector, size and product. They found that organisational context had a strong influence on the study results. Thus they recommended that future studies should include the effect of variables such as the organisational structure, perhaps represented by the span of control of line managers or the industry, on the effectiveness of line managers in HRM implementation. Paustian-Underdahl et al (2013) suggested that future researchers may want to examine the potentially moderating effects of contextual (e.g., organisational or environmental) factors that may impact line managers' ability to be supportive of others in the workplace). Ellinger et al (2006) identified the environmental factors

and organisational contextual factors that may influence managerial coaching as issues that need to be further explicated in future research. Ellinger & Cseh (2007) highlighted that avenues for future research include research that continues to explicate the contextual factors that promote and impede the facilitation of learning will also enable practitioners and researchers to better assess organisations as settings for such learning, as well as design appropriate developmental interventions to help employees build their capabilities.

Park (2011) suggested that the roles of organisational learning culture and line managers, which reflect social and contextual characteristics in work environments, could be significant topics for workplace learning research. Ellinger (2005) suggested that future research could explore different organisational settings as an environment for informal workplace learning so a more comprehensive understanding of how organisations promote and impede informal learning can emerge. Ellinger (2005) also argued that research that continues to explore the contextual factors that promote and impede informal learning will enable practitioners and researchers to better assess an organisation as a setting for such learning, as well as develop tools to measure the extent to which this type of learning is occurring and the factors that positively and negatively influence such learning.

Van der Pol (2011) argued that certain aspects of the context and the environment can either support or hinder line managers from influencing employee's professional development. By investigating the effects of variables on the role of line managers (affecting the learning motives and learning activities of employees), the influence of the line manager's role can be further amplified. Poell et al (2004) argued that workplace learning needs to be studied in relation to its various contexts, that is, in relation to job and task characteristics; in interaction with the organising strategies of employees and line managers in the workplace; and within the broader learning culture and climate of the organisation. Park et al (2008) suggested that researchers need to consider the interaction among factors influencing workplace learning or among these factors and organisational contexts. Bakker et al (2011) argued the need to pay more attention to the broader contextual organisational factors that impact on engagement. Martins (2007) suggested that future research should consider an approach, which can be more generalised to a wider external environment - a

framework relative to a broader range of sectors would be of immense value to line managers involved in HRM strategy and decision making at the line manager level.

Wollard & Shuck (2011) suggested that there are opportunities to study a broad range of settings and to determine whether engagement is more likely to endure in particular types of enterprises. Cohen (2013) suggested that studies of the phenomenon of frontline management in specific industry sectors of varying organisational size and employee turnover, may assist organisations to develop learning capability. Sikora & Ferris (2011) recommended future research into the influence of critical factors in line managers' implementation of HR practices across different cultures, countries and types of organisation.

2.15.4 The need to examine the implications for both organisations and line managers of Employee Development dynamics in project-oriented companies:

Midler (1995) argued that the project-based organisation stands out as a highly relevant organisational context for research into HRM. Bredin & Söderlund (2007) pointed out that even though many researchers have argued for the need to study HRM in project-based organisations, little empirical research has been reported. Bredin & Söderlund's (2007) study only looked at one company in one industry and one country, and they subsequently suggested studies that elaborate on more structured comparisons, for example by analysing different types of project-based organisations, in different industries and with different engineering logics. Bredin & Söderlund (2007) also recommended to investigate what are the challenges in transforming line management, for instance, how to design competence development programs for the new HR-oriented management roles, how to find people with adequate background and training, and how to coordinate their work.

2.15.5 The need to derive a clearer understanding of how to intervene to improve engagement at the level of the individual, the team, the business unit, and the organisation:

Bakker et al (2011) proposed that critical levels of job demands and resources are assessed – if one is able to find out what the correlates of work engagement are, these working conditions offer a good basis for intervention. In addition, Bakker

et al (2011) contended that there is a need to derive a clearer understanding of how to intervene to improve engagement at the level of the individual, the team, the business unit, and the organisation. Bakker & Leiter (2010) argued that from a practical perspective, intervention studies are useful and that well-informed action has the potential to contribute to the quality of life within the participating organisation. They suggested that studies could improve line manager empowerment by improving their access to knowledge, materials, or support staff to determine its impact on work engagement. Sikora & Ferris (2014) suggested that researchers could examine the impact of organisational incentives on implementation efforts. Do line managers handle their HR implementation responsibilities differently when organisations have a greater number of implementation-focused performance incentives? If so, which incentives appear to have the greatest influence on implementation activities? Sikora & Ferris (2014) also argued that an additional organisational-level HR implementation issue involves how HR practices are implemented across complex multi-unit and/or multi-culture firms. Depending on which unit of these organisations is examined, HR implementation might look very different. For instance, HR practices, and the implementation of those practices, might vary considerably based on industry, business strategy, job-type, level of the business, etc. Sikora & Ferris (2014) suggested that alignment with these organisational characteristics also could be an important part of future research efforts focused on effective HR implementation.

2.15.6 The need to obtain data from different perspectives to examine whether or not there is a variation in the perceptions regarding line managers' participation in Employee Development activities:

A limitation of both the Sikora & Ferris (2011) study and the Bos-Nehles et al (2013) study was the fact that both studies collected data about influencing factors from only one set of stakeholders – from line managers. The multiple-constituency approach suggested by Tsui (1990) proposed that it would be beneficial to collect data from multiple stakeholders. It would also be desirable to test the perceptions of other stakeholders surrounding the line manager (senior managers, HRD practitioners, subordinate employees) in order to obtain a more rounded picture. Both studies suggested that it would also be desirable to test the perceptions of other stakeholders surrounding the line manager (senior managers,

HRD practitioners, subordinate employees) in order to obtain a more rounded picture. Bos-Nehles et al (2013) advocated a multiple-constituency approach to collect data from multiple stakeholders surrounding the line manager, including not only subordinates but also senior managers and HRM managers. In addition, Margaryan et al (2013) found that the limited empirical research has examined learning facilitation activities from the line managers themselves, overlooking subordinates' perceptions of what their line managers do in practice to support their learning. Margaryan et al (2013) suggested that future research could bring together findings from studies examining learning facilitation activities as perceived by line managers with perceptions of senior managers and comparing and contrasting these perceptions. According to Margaryan et al (2013) this would provide insight into potential tensions and individual and organisational contradictions around learning relationships in the workplace. It would also be useful to examine whether or not there is a variation in the perceptions of those supervisees who have managerial responsibilities and those who do not.

Chapter 3:
Literature synthesis, research question and objectives

3.1 Literature synthesis and link to the research question

The literature review brought to light that there is a skills shortage in the Oil and Gas industry and suggested that a capability approach through development of existing employees is an appropriate response. Line managers, who are involved with employees on a daily basis, play an essential role in developing the firm's human resources. Therefore, success of an Employee Development strategy is dependent on line manager support and engagement. However, research evidence has shown that achieving the required engagement and support from line managers is not straightforward. Consequently, it is critical to understand the factors that inhibit or facilitate line managers' engagement in support of employees' development.

Job demands and the availability of job resources are important antecedents of work engagement. Likewise, individual characteristics such as self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience are also linked to work engagement. Additionally, the context in which line managers operate has an effect on engagement. This context may include organisation factors such as culture and structures. Context may also comprise factors that influence the line manager's ability, motivation and opportunity to perform the required tasks.

The literature review of relevant organisation factors in Chapter 2.12 highlighted that significant among organisational factors likely to influence line managers' engagement in supporting employees' development are:

- Organisational culture - that the organisation is positive and supportive of line managers' engagement in supporting development of subordinate employees (e.g. Page et al, 2003),
- Leadership direction - that leadership is showing role model behaviours with regard to subordinate employees' development (e.g. McComb, 2012),
- Value articulation – that line managers understand why the organisation values Employee Development and line managers' support for subordinate employees' development (e.g. Yarnall, 2008),
- Goal orientation - that the organisation sets an appropriate balance between short term imperatives versus long term business needs and between performance targets versus development objectives (e.g. Pousa & Mathieu, 2010).

The literature review of task factors in Chapter 2.13 showed that important considerations can be analysed by the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity model.

Regarding ability factors, the literature review pointed to the following noteworthy considerations when trying to comprehend line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development:

- Identifying the necessary skills (e.g. Noer, 2005),
- Understanding whether these skills likely to be different than technical skills a line manager has so far developed in his/her career (e.g. Silverman, 2003),
- The extent to which line managers already possess these skills and whether they are interested in improving them (e.g. Leisink & Knies, 2011),
- The impact that training, possibly supplemented by coaching, can have on a line manager's ability (e.g. Olivero et al, 1997),

Principal motivation factors to consider when trying to evaluate line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development are:

- Performance incentives – how the organisation provides encouragement to line managers (e.g. Beattie, 2002),
- Accountability – how the organisation makes line managers responsible and answerable (e.g. Kraines, 2001),
- Return on investment - the line manager's perception that they will gain something by supporting subordinate employees' development (e.g. McGovern, 1999),
- Social exchange - the line manager's belief that the degree of support provided by the organisation to support his/her development sets a standard to be followed for supporting subordinate employees' development (e.g. Purcell & Hutchinson, 2007).
- Intrinsic motivation – the line manager's motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself (e.g. Ryan & Deci, 2000).
- Need for autonomy – line managers' perceptions of their freedom of choice. Line managers engage because they choose to do so, not because they feel pressured by other people or external factors. Line managers also need independence and discretion how the activity should be performed (e.g. Kuvaas et al, 2014)

- Need for purpose - line managers' perceptions that supporting subordinate employees' development is a meaningful activity and will make a difference (e.g. Morrison et al, 2007).
- Need for relatedness - line managers' want to interact, be connected to, and experience caring for others (e.g. van den Broeck et al, 2010).
- Desire for competence - the extent to which a line manager's confidence in his/her ability influences engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development (e.g. de Jong et al, 1999),

Regarding opportunity factors, the literature review pointed to the following concerns when trying to cognise line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development:

- Organisational support - the aid made available by the organisation when it is needed to carry out one's job effectively and to deal with stressful situations (e.g. Shannock & Eisenberger, 2006),
- Guidance - clear policies regarding the use of HRD policies and practices (e.g. Nehles et al, 2006),
- Effectiveness of HRD practices - the suitability of the organisation's HRD practices to help manage Employee Development duties (e.g. Tansky & Cohen, 2001),
- Relationships with HRD - the service level, trust level and knowledge level that HRD practitioners can be relied upon to provide in support and partnership of line manager's Employee Development activities (e.g. Qadeer et al, 2011),
- Role clarity - clear policies regarding role expectations and the division of responsibilities and authority between various stakeholders (e.g. McConville, 2006),
- Role conflict - incongruity between operational and developmental role expectations, including the difference between expectations of employees compared with line managers (e.g. McConville, 2006),
- Pressure of short-term imperatives - the difficulty of prioritizing immediate performance targets within competing demands (e.g. Tsui, 1987),
- Workload - of the amount of work that needs to be done, creating an exposure to demands that require more time, energy and commitment than one can provide (e.g. Sambrook, 2005),

Chapter 2.15 of the literature review emphasised that it may be possible for organisations to enhance line managers' engagement in Employee Development activities by mitigating job demands and providing relevant resources. Such interventions could be at the organisational, job and individual levels.

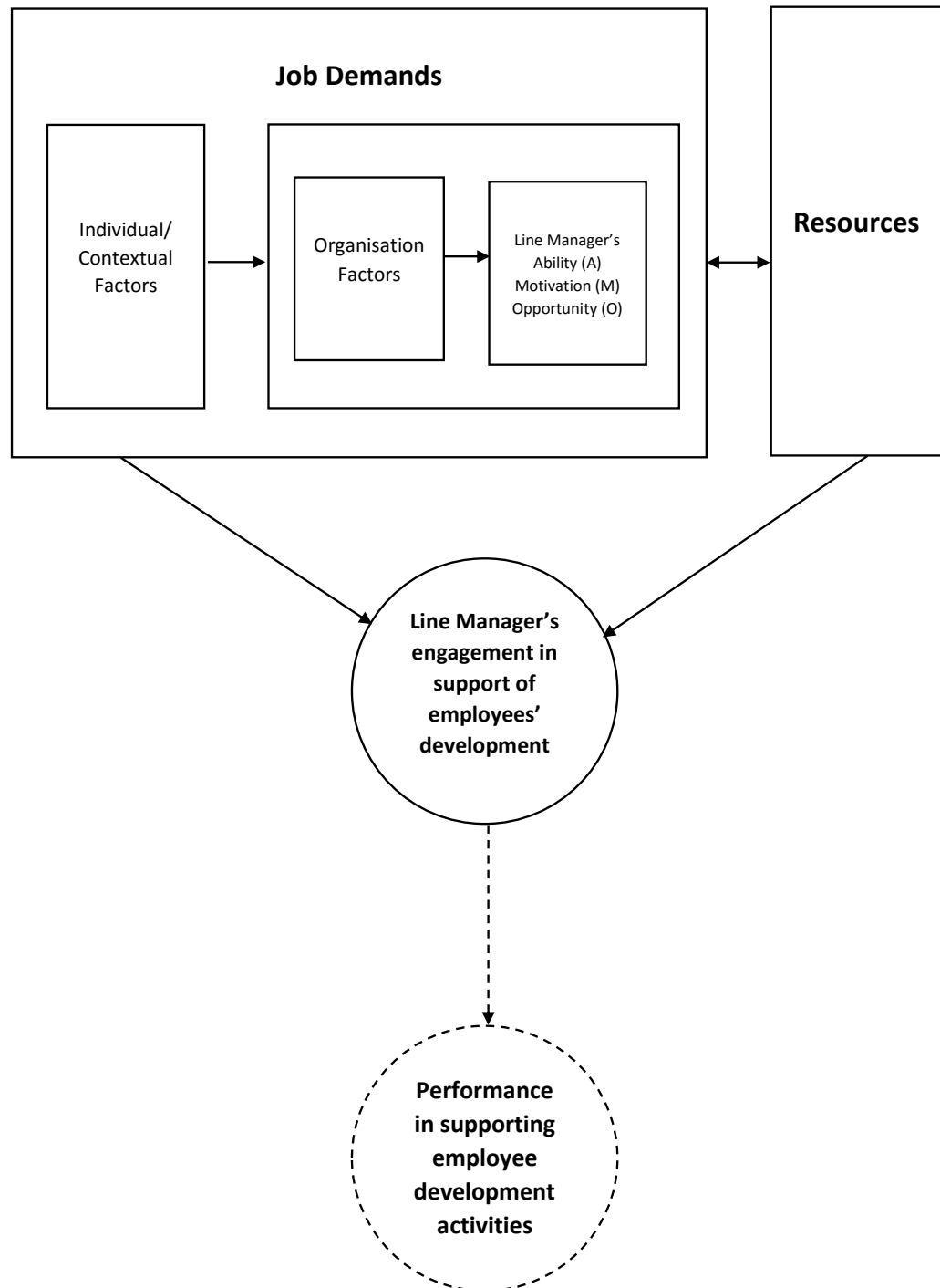


Figure 3.1: An operating framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development

In Chapter 2.16 of this literature review a number of gaps have been acknowledged, especially by contemporary researchers, and brought together to create a knowledge gap that can begin to be answered through this current study. The literature base has pointed to more research being required in the following areas:

- A need to understand the organisational, task and individual factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' support for subordinate employees' development
- A need to examine the potentially moderating effects of demographic/contextual factors that may impact line managers' ability to be supportive of others in the workplace
- A need to examine the implications for both organisations and line managers of Employee Development dynamics in project-oriented companies
- A need to derive a clearer understanding of how to intervene to improve engagement at the level of the individual, the team, the business unit, and the organisation
- A need to obtain data from different perspectives to examine whether or not there is a variation in the perceptions regarding line managers' participation in Employee Development activities.

These elements were synthesised into a research question, research objectives and additional research propositions regarding line manager's engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development, which are detailed below.

3.2 The Research Question

What are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors that most influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development and to what extent are these factors mediated by demographic and contextual factors? In addition, how can an organisation intervene in the management of these factors in order to increase line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development?

3.3 The research objectives

In light of the literature review and identification of the gaps in the literature the research objectives were as follows:

1. To explore line manager and other stakeholder perceptions of what are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors most influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.
2. To identify which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives.
3. To ascertain the extent to which individual and contextual factors also exert an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

3.4 Additional research hypotheses

In order to ascertain the extent to which individual and contextual factors also exert an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development the following hypotheses were tested:

Hypothesis 1

H₀: Job role (membership of a different stakeholder group) does not have an influence on stakeholder perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Job role (membership of a different stakeholder group) has an influence on stakeholder perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 2

H₀: Line managers' gender does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' gender has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 3

H₀: Line managers' organisation type (project versus routine) does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' organisation type (project versus routine) has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 4

H₀: Line managers' functional discipline does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' functional discipline has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 5

H₀: Line managers' span of control does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' span of control has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 6

H₀: Line managers' type/length of experience does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' type/length of experience has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 7

H₀: Line managers' age does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' age has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Hypothesis 8

H₀: Line managers' geographic origin does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' geographic origin has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

3.5 Research significance

In focusing on the factors that promote managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, the study will make three important contributions:

1. It will contribute to the growing knowledge of factors that encourage and inhibit line managers' engagement in support of employees' development, including examining which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours,
2. It aims to identify the extent to which contextual and individual factors moderate the influence of organisational and task factors,
3. It should provide a basis for businesses improving their performance by properly aligning engagement intervention levers relating to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

Chapter 4:

Research methodology

4.1 Summary of the methodology

The general purpose of this chapter is to frame the research methods that were used in this particular study. This chapter has two related objectives: (a) to describe the research perspectives; and (b) to describe the methodology and logistics that were used to answer the research questions - including a description and rationale for the quantitative and qualitative data collection tools.

In selecting the methodology to be used within this thesis, it was necessary to select methods that would appropriately answer the research hypotheses. This involved an understanding of the philosophical world view held by the researcher in addition to how the multitude of research methods available offer a best fit to answering the hypotheses.

4.2 The research paradigm and theoretical framework

Researchers are urged to locate their research in a selected paradigm. Morgan (2007) defines a paradigm as “the set of beliefs and practices that guide a field”, and it can be used to summarise the beliefs of researchers. Paradigm differences influence how we know, our interpretation of reality and our values and methodology in research.

This “world view” of a researcher is greatly influenced by the positivist scientific model of research associated with quantitative methods and the interpretative model associated with qualitative ones. The simplistic view of quantitative research is that it is an objective process of deduction whereas the qualitative process is subjective and a process of induction that can only be viewed in context (Morgan, 2007).

In many cases it is suggested that the most effective approach will be to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods or techniques (Williams & Katz, 2001). The strength of quantitative methods is that they may be used to develop reliable descriptions and provide accurate comparisons. In the exploratory phase of an investigation, quantitative methods can identify patterns and associations that may otherwise be masked. Qualitative methods can help to illuminate complex concepts and relationships that are unlikely to be captured by predetermined response categories or standardised quantitative measures. However, when mixing quantitative and qualitative approaches, paradigm may become a concern. This question of whether or not quantitative and qualitative methods should be combined has been a source of controversy for the supporters of two competing methodological standpoints - the purists and the pragmatists (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998). The purists take the view that quantitative and qualitative methods are based on mutually exclusive assumptions and, given that there is almost no common ground between them, the methods are incompatible. The pragmatists argue that researchers should use whatever methods are needed to obtain the optimum results, even if this involves switching between alternative paradigms.

One way to address the ‘incompatibility thesis’ (Howe, 1988) is to subscribe to a paradigm that is inclusive enough to accommodate this tension. In this regard, critical realism is often quoted as a suitable paradigm for mixed methods research.

According to Shannon-Baker (2015) critical realism bridges divides between quantitative and qualitative approaches but is based specifically in the belief that theories on reality are partial thus emphasizing the importance of diverse viewpoints. This ontology then allows for researchers to legitimately discuss divergences in their findings compared to existing literature. Critical realism can help facilitate dialogue across differences theoretically. It also encourages including insights that are mentally based, such as collecting perception- and reflection-based data. Its emphasis on relationships is connected to its ability to infer causal relationships that are both contextually based and generalisable to others.

A similar suggestion is that pragmatism offers a useful middle position philosophically and methodologically with its emphasis on finding a practically useful method to researching a specific question. The philosophy of pragmatism advances the notion that the consequences are more important than the process and therefore that ‘the end justifies the means’. This approach to research advocates that researchers are free to determine what works to answer the research questions - the practicalities of research are such that it cannot be driven by theory or data exclusively and a process of abduction is recommended which enables one to move back and forth between induction and deduction through a process of inquiry (Morgan, 2007).

There are important aspects regarding how pragmatism creates the design of a research study:

- the pragmatist does not see the world as an absolute unity, or only one way.
- pragmatism allows for truth to be reported as what works at the time rather than as a duel between reality that is independent of the mind or reality that is within the mind.
- pragmatism permits the researcher to discover “what” and “how” rather than to research based upon intended consequences.
- pragmatism provides researchers the freedom to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet his or her needs and purposes. The pragmatist views many approaches to collecting and analysing data – both qualitatively or quantitatively.

This researcher is a pragmatist - in that he believes in using “whatever works” to answer the research question. For this researcher, the purpose of research is to find solutions to real-world problems in a manner that the solutions are generalisable. This researcher wants to see the knowledge that is gained through this particular study is transferred into a change in practice.

Another issue, raised by Bryman (2007), is that mixed methods researchers do not always bring their findings together and that the quantitative and qualitative components are treated as separate domains. Bryman suggests that lack of integration could lead to mixed methods researchers not always making the most of the data they collect. In order to answer the research question and related hypotheses, this particular study was based on an exploratory and explanatory case study approach, using a quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (focus group interviews) data assembling instruments in sequence. First, questionnaire data was collected from the target population and then evaluated using appropriate statistical tests to understand how many respondents held a certain opinion. This analysed data was then presented to focus group participants to explore more deeply the issues that were raised in the questionnaire, for example: to validate the questionnaire results; to develop the questionnaire results; to contradict the questionnaire results; to expand the questionnaire results; to examine for reactance and bias.

Wolff et al (1993) argued that although survey and focus group techniques are derived from divergent theoretical approaches, there is nothing inherent in the methods themselves that forbids their combination. According to Kitzinger (1995) questionnaires are more appropriate for obtaining quantitative information and explaining how many people hold a certain opinion; focus groups are better for exploring exactly how those opinions are constructed. Wolff et al (1993) demonstrated how incorporating a qualitative approach, represented by the focus group method, into an integrated research design with a major sample survey component can enhance the quality of the resulting analysis and the confidence that can be placed in it. For example, Winborne & Dardaine-Ragguet (1993) used the focus group to generate additional, more open-ended conversation among teachers about survey results on ‘at risk’ children in an educational setting. Powell et al (1996) also demonstrated that focus groups enhance the validity of existing questionnaires by highlighting those concerns that would otherwise have been

neglected. Thus while surveys can identify gaps, focus groups can explain why these gaps occur. According to Williams & Katz (2001) quantitative work (such as the collection of survey data) transfers the original voices of its research subjects into statistical data, mathematical relations, or other abstract parameters, leaving little understanding of the context in which particular social practices occur. In contrast, qualitative methods (such as focus groups) pay more attention to the original voices of actors in their everyday life, allowing researchers the possibility of observing and presenting a broader view of reality.

4.3 Method selection

Building on the proposition of the pragmatic paradigm that an overall approach to research is that of mixing data collection methods and data analysis procedures within the research process (Creswell, 2013), this particular study consisted of a mixed methods case study design, which was conducted in three sequential phases:

1. A pilot study to evaluate the main research methodology and determine any necessary changes to the main study.
2. Analysing data that was collected from various stakeholder groups by questionnaires. Stakeholders comprised:
 - Line managers,
 - Employees,
 - Senior managers,
 - HRD practitioners.
3. Analysing data that was collected from line managers in focus groups.

4.4 Justification of the methodological choice

Sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 of this Chapter set out some of the advantages and disadvantages of questionnaire research and focus group studies. Section 4.4.3 then examines the choice of a case study design.

4.4.1. Questionnaires

The questionnaire approach allows data collection from a large number of respondents and can be easily coded. This methodology also provides a standardized data-gathering procedure, is replicable and also eliminates any bias introduced by the feelings of the respondents towards the interviewer (or vice versa). Stakeholders may not like to be identified for having taken part in this research; therefore, questionnaires can be an effective tool to gather information from such respondents. The primary disadvantages of the questionnaire are that questions cannot be explained to respondents and can be misinterpreted. In addition, the questionnaire approach places limitations on getting context and full meaning behind responses. The possibility of a low response rate also poses a significant problem.

4.4.2. Focus groups

Some of the disadvantages of the questionnaire approach may be mitigated by following up with focus interviews with groups of line managers. Kitzinger (1995) described focus groups as a form of group interview that capitalises on communication between research participants in order to generate data. Kitzinger (1995) suggested that although group interviews are often used simply as a quick and convenient way to collect data from several people simultaneously, focus groups explicitly use group interaction as part of the method. This means that instead of the researcher asking each person to respond to a question in turn, people are encouraged to talk to one another: asking questions, exchanging anecdotes and commenting on each other's experiences and points of view (Kitzinger 1995). The method is particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and can be used to examine not only what people think but how they think and why they think that way. The use of focus groups allows for gaining consensus on topics as well as gathering differences of opinion and experience. As a method, focus groups provide a naturalistic and detailed

snapshot of an issue by allowing participants, in this case line managers, to clarify issues within a group setting (McLafferty, 2004).

Kitzinger (1994) argued that an advantage of focus groups is that participants act as an audience for each other which encourages a greater variety of communication than is often evident within more traditional methods of data collection. Fontana & Frey (2005) contended that an advantage of conducting focus groups is that the stimulation group discussion provided for respondents helps them to recall events and experiences which may not occur in the individual interview. According to Kitzinger (1995) potential advantages of a focus group are that they encourage participation from those who are reluctant to be interviewed on their own and can also encourage contributions from people who feel they have nothing to say. According to Yin (2010), by using focus groups instead of interviewing individuals there is a gain in efficiency, but a loss of depth (gaining less information from any single participant). Kitzinger (1995) also points out that the downside of such group dynamics is that the articulation of group norms may silence individual voices of dissent. The presence of other research participants also compromises the confidentiality of the research session.

4.4.3. Case study design

The criteria for choice for research design include (Easterby-Smith et al, 2008):

- Personal preference of researchers themselves,
- Aims or context of research to be carried out,
- Will the research be valid, reliable and generalisable,
- The resources available to the study.

There are many different research design alternatives which can be applied in a research study, such as experiment, survey, case study, action research, and archival research. Although some of these methods could potentially be used, the aim, objectives and questions, as well as the philosophical perspective opted for this particular study warranted the use of a case study approach in the research. For instance, case studies answer better the “how”, “why” and “what” questions of study questions which helps to achieve the aim and objectives of the research (Yin, 2013). A case study method also provides the opportunity that the study is undertaken in a manner that incorporates the views of the people (participants) in the field of study (Yin, 2013). In addition, a case study method helps to deal fully

with all varieties of evidence, for example, questionnaires and focus group interviews (Yin, 2013). Further, case study design does not provide an opportunity for the researcher to influence or change the attitudes or procedures of the participants or the environment and yet it permits the researcher to explore into the behavioural patterns of the participants (Yin, 2013). A case study method through the exploratory and explanatory strategy offers in-depth details and potential understanding of the various impacts of independent variables to dependent variables. Therefore, the case study is a preferred design option for this particular study compared to the other design alternatives.

The case study was carried out within Chevron Project Resources Company (PRC), which operates within the construction sector of the Oil and Gas Industry and is headquartered in Houston, Texas. Chevron is one of the world's leading integrated energy companies, with subsidiaries that conduct business worldwide. Chevron is involved in virtually every facet of the energy industry. The company explores for, produces and transports crude oil and natural gas; refines, markets and distributes transportation fuels and other energy products; manufactures and sells petrochemical products; generates power and produces geothermal energy; and develops the energy resources of the future, including biofuels.

Chevron.com states that “the company's success is driven by the ingenuity and commitment of its employees and their application of the most innovative technologies in the world. We believe in lifelong learning and offer our employees a number of avenues to continually develop their skills and grow in their jobs.” PRC is the Chevron centre of expertise for selecting and developing megaprojects safely, on budget and on time. Chevron.com states that PRC’s work “is critical” and that “as our company pursues ever larger, more highly complex projects, it is necessary that we have the skill set and organisational capability to execute them with excellence.”

This company was chosen as a sample because the candidate, who has over 25 years of international experience in various business, commercial and human capital roles with varying degrees of management responsibility, is currently employed in coordinating Employee Development programs and activities within the company. The company itself is affected by skill shortages in the Oil and Gas Industry previously discussed in the literature review, and is harnessing various Employee Development initiatives to build and strengthen necessary

organisational capabilities. Therefore, this particular study provided a means for the company to gain an understanding of why line manager engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development can be problematic, but should also provide a basis for the company to improve performance by properly aligning engagement intervention levers.

4.5 Research ethics

This particular study was conducted in accordance with the following ethical guidelines:

- All participation by questionnaire and focus group contributors to this research was voluntary and full consent was obtained prior to their participation in the study,
- The use of offensive, discriminatory, or other unacceptable language was avoided in the formulation of survey questions and focus group interviews,
- Respect for the dignity of research participants was prioritised,
- Privacy and anonymity of questionnaire and focus group contributors was of a paramount importance, including ensuring an adequate level of confidentiality of the research data,
- Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research was avoided,
- Any type of communication in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency,
- The highest level of objectivity in discussions and analyses was maintained throughout the research,
- Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way was avoided,
- Works of other authors used in any part of this particular study have been acknowledged.

4.6 Pilot study

4.6.1 Pilot study method

The pilot study constituted a small-scale test of the methods and procedures to be used on a larger scale in the main research. The pilot study was used to pre-test the questionnaire research instrument so that it might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether the proposed methods or the wording and the order of the questions are inappropriate or too complicated. The pilot study linked to the main research question and related hypotheses through its focused investigation into what various stakeholders perceive as the factors hindering or facilitating the line manager's role as developers of employees – with an emphasis on organisational factors, ability factors, motivation factors and opportunity factors.

The pilot study sample size consisted of 50 invitations. Pilot sample size depends on the particular purpose of the pilot study, as well as the criterion of obtaining maximum information with minimum cost. Johanson & Brooks (2010) investigated the choice of sample size for pilot studies from a perspective particularly related to instrument development. Their study suggested that 30 representative participants from the population of interest is a reasonable minimum recommendation for a pilot study where the purpose is preliminary survey or scale development. Further, Johanson & Brooks' results confirmed the existing literature in this area (e.g. Hertzog, 2008). Additionally, for a feasibility study, Hertzog (2008) suggested that samples as small as 10 to 15 per group sometimes being sufficient. For instrument development, Hertzog's recommendation was 25 to 40.

Each respondent was contacted either in person, by telephone or by e-mail to request their participation in the pilot study. This request included making the respondents aware of the purpose of the main study and how the pilot study links to the main study. This initial request was followed by an email that gave more details of the main study, the procedure to be followed during pilot study participation and a URL link to the online questionnaire. The respondents were also requested to return a feedback sheet with any suggestions for improvements.

Holloway (1997) argued that separate pilot studies are not necessary for focus groups, although piloting of qualitative approaches can also be carried out if the

researcher lacks confidence or is a novice, particularly when using the interview technique. This particular study did not include a pilot study for the focus group segment of the research.

4.6.2 Pilot study results

Completed pilot study questionnaires totalled 40 and the data from these completed questionnaires were collated and analysed. The analysis was structured around the same format as the outcomes of the literature synthesis with a view to the pilot study results being presented in a format compatible with the development of the formal theory.

For each question asked the mean response was calculated overall and for each factor – organisation, ability, opportunity, motivation. Comparisons were then performed between groups of respondents (for example, line managers or female line managers, etc) to allow linkage to the various research hypotheses.

Where respondents had used the feedback sheet or an accompanying email to provide any suggestions for improvements, these were also reviewed and analysed. Additional feedback from several respondents related to concerns about the rating scale used in the questionnaire, and in particular that it required a lot of thinking to tie the question to the required response. A Likert-type rating scale, on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree, was used in the pilot study questionnaire.

Example of Pilot form:

Please rate how you perceive that line manager engagement in support of employee development is influenced by the following organisational considerations. Line manager engagement in support of employee development is influenced by whether:

Strongly
Disagree

Disagree

Neither
Agree nor
Disagree

Agree

Strongly
Agree

A further literature review disclosed Saris et al's (2010) study, which found that responses to Agree/Disagree rating scale questions have much lower quality, reliability and validity than responses to comparable questions offering Item

Specific responses. An Item Specific scale is a much more direct way to collect an opinion from individuals than one using the Agree/Disagree rating scale because the categories used to express the opinion are exactly those answers desired to be obtained for an item. Saris et al (2010) outlined how the cognitive processes entailed in answering an Agree/Disagree question are likely to be more burdensome and complex than the cognitive processes entailed in answering a comparable Item Specific response option question, which aligns with the feedback from this pilot study. Additionally, Krosnick & Fabrigar (1997) found that that some people answer Agree/Disagree questions by agreeing with any assertion, regardless of its content.

These results suggested that it would be more attractive to use Item Specific scales instead of Agree/Disagree scales whenever possible in this particular. Accordingly, a five-choice continuum, ranging from very important to very unimportant, and including a “don’t know” alternative was offered in the survey instrument used in the main study.

Example of Revised form:

In relation to line manager engagement in support of employee development, how would you rate the following organisational considerations:

Very important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Quite Unimportant	Very unimportant	Don't Know
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4.6.3 Response bias issues

Response bias refers to questionnaire participants’ inability or unwillingness to answer questions correctly. Response bias can lead researchers to believe that the questionnaire participants think a certain way when, in reality, they answered the question randomly or misinterpreted the survey question.

For this particular study, a variety of techniques were adopted while framing the questionnaire in an attempt to make it more likely that the target audience would respond and therefore mitigate the impact of response bias. Questions were kept short and clear, precise, simple language was used, leading questions were

avoided, and interval questioning was made use of. Also, the questionnaire was structured so that concepts were broken down (organisation factors, opportunity factors, etc.), and content was personalised to the target audience so that they would find it relevant.

In addition, each question included a simple, exhaustive set of answer options. The Likert Scale was used, which is the most universal method for survey collection and therefore easily understood. Using this method, responses are easily quantifiable and subjective to computation of some mathematical analysis. Since it does not require the participant to provide a simple and concrete yes or no answer, it does not force a respondent to take a stand on a particular topic, but allows them to respond in a degree of agreement. Additionally, when respondents are presented with a survey, their answers are influenced by the order in which questions are presented. In a list of questions, respondents will be more tired when they answer the later questions, and tend to put less effort into answering them. If there are blocks of similar questions, respondents will sometimes just answer all the blocks in the same way that they answered the first block. Therefore, using a functionality of Qualtrics (see Chapter 4.8), the order of the questions was randomised to make the order-effect as small as possible.

These elements were tested during the pilot study and, based on participant feedback, particular questions were adapted or adjusted in the questionnaire used for the main study.

4.6.4 Pilot study significance

The significance of the pilot study was that it:

- Assured the candidate that all the data required for the main research would be available.
- Assured the candidate that the questions being asked would likely yield the data necessary to address the main research question and hypotheses,
- Assured the candidate that the identified stakeholder groups had the necessary data and were able to share it.

4.6.5 Pilot study limitations

A limitation of the pilot study was the relatively small size of the sample. This made it problematic to find significant relationships from the data, as statistical tests normally require a larger sample size to ensure a representative distribution of the population and to be considered representative of groups of people to whom results will be generalized or transferred.

4.7 Construct of the questionnaire instrument

When considering the factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, the literature review and synthesis drew attention to the need for investigation into the need to focus on four key factors:

1. The organisational factor, which can be regarded as a function of four items – organisational culture, leadership direction, value articulation and goal orientation.
2. The ability factor, which can be regarded as the key competencies for line managers to successfully support employees' development.
3. The motivation factor, which can be regarded as a function of nine items - performance incentives, accountability, return on investment, social exchange, intrinsic motivation, need for autonomy, need for purpose, need for relatedness, and desire for competence.
4. The opportunity factor, which can be regarded as a function of nine sub-items (guidance, effectiveness of HRD practices, relationship with HRD practitioners, role clarity, role conflict), work responsibilities, turnover frequency, workload, and competing demands) that are combined into three composite items – organisational support, role dissonance and ambiguity, and how work is organised.

Accordingly, questions were developed in order to ascertain respondents' perceptions of how these factors influence line managers' engagement in supporting employees' development. For each factor, questions were also designed to enable respondents give details of any other issues they considered important but not already highlighted in the questions.

The literature review also emphasised the need to investigate if there are any relationships between individual or demographic characteristics and the propensity for line managers to engage in supporting employees' development. Therefore, individual and other contextual data of respondents was also collected (such as type of organisation, age, gender, experience, level in hierarchy, etc.) to help discern the extent to which demographic and contextual factors influence the various stakeholders' responses. Additionally, the learnings from the pilot study, mentioned in Chapter 4.5 above, were incorporated into the final questionnaire instrument.

A detailed categorisation of the questionnaire instrument as well as a copy of the questionnaire sent to participants in the main study are included in Appendix C and Appendix A respectively.

4.8 Details of the questionnaire data collection process

4.8.1 Software

The final questionnaire was created using Qualtrics and included questions with responses framed as multiple choice single-answer or multiple choice multiple-answer, with a five point Likert scale. Qualtrics is a generalized web-based survey service permitting the creation of survey instruments, distribution of the surveys, data storage and analysis. Qualtrics also has important quality control features, such as preventing multiple submissions from a single survey participant. Qualtrics is user-friendly and able to handle flexible question types for collective quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, the ability to download data into Microsoft Excel or IBM SPSS Statistics v.22 with the full syntax retained. Quantitative statistical analysis performed with Qualtrics is cited in a number of professional and academic journals and books. The software is easy to use and administer - respondents simply visit a uniform resource indicator (URL) and take the survey.

4.8.2 Sampling

As discussed in Chapter 4.4.3, this particular study was carried out within Chevron Project Resources Company (PRC), which operates across the construction sector of the Oil and Gas Industry and is headquartered in Houston, Texas. The questionnaire URL was distributed by email to the 845 Chevron employees who were assigned to the Project Resources Company (PRC) in April/May 2015.

There was an element of stratification in that at least 363 of these employees were known to have line manager responsibilities and these particular individuals were additionally contacted by telephone, email or instant messenger to discuss the purpose of the study and further encourage their participation. Moreover, the number of HRD practitioners within PRC was limited, so the survey invitation was also extended to 40 other HRD practitioners within the overall Chevron corporation.

4.8.3 Code of conduct

In accordance with the research ethics noted above in Chapter 4.5, a code of conduct was adopted to regulate the questionnaire phase, as follows:

- Each questionnaire participant was given an information sheet outlining the topic for research,
- Questionnaire participants had the right to not participate,
- Questionnaire participants were able refuse to answer any question without giving a reason,
- Questionnaire participants were informed that confidentiality of data will be maintained and no responses will be identified with individuals.

4.8.4 Data collection

Questionnaire responses were collected through Qualtrics, exported from Qualtrics to Microsoft Excel, checked for errors or missing data, and then exported to IBM SPSS Statistics v.22 for analysis.

4.8.5 Responses

The final tally of questionnaire responses is shown below in Figure 4.1:

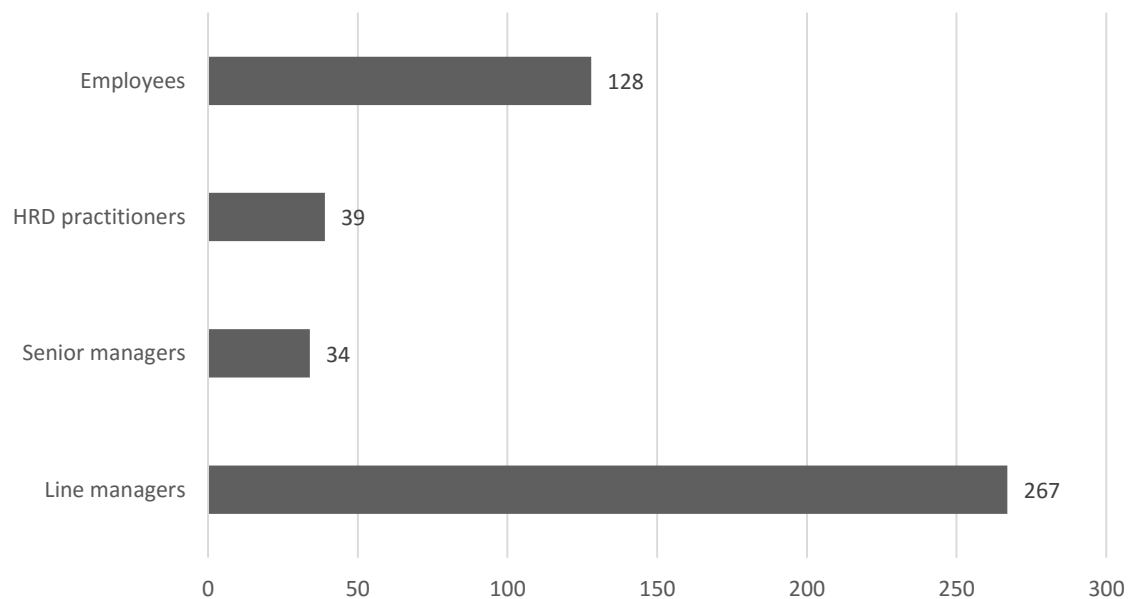


Figure 4.1: Number of questionnaire responses (by respondent category)

4.8.6 Questionnaire: consistency of scales

Internal consistency - whether items that have been proposed to evaluate the same general construct produce similar scores.- was tested by Cronbach's Alpha. George & Mallery (2006) provided the following rules of thumb: > 0.9 – Excellent, > 0.8 – Good, > 0.7 – Acceptable, > 0.6 – Questionable, > 0.5 – Poor,

and < 0.5 – Unacceptable. Cronbach's Alpha results indicated that the scales used in this particular study had good to acceptable internal consistency, as shown in Table 5.2 below:

	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Organisational culture	0.827	6
Leadership direction	0.811	3
Value articulation	0.699	2
Goal orientation	0.731	3
Organisational support	0.796	4
Role Dissonance and ambiguity	0.667	3
How work is organised	0.766	5
Accountability	0.752	2
Performance incentives	0.857	3
Return on investment	0.742	2
Social exchange	n/a	1
Need for purpose	0.779	4
Need for autonomy	0.773	2
Need for relatedness	0.725	3
Need for competence	0.709	2
Intrinsic motivation	0.733	3

Table 4.1: Consistency results for survey scales

4.9 Details of the focus groups data collection process

As discussed in Chapter 4.4, the purpose of conducting focus groups was to act as a follow-up that assisted in interpreting the survey results (Morgan, 1996). This part of the study consisted of five focus groups containing between six and eight line managers. Each focus group took place in a private conference room at an appropriate location and lasted between 45 and 90 minutes.

4.9.1 Sampling and number of groups

In general, the goal was to conduct only as many focus groups as were required to provide a trustworthy answer to the research question due to the costs involved of conducting more groups (Morgan, 1997). According to Morgan (1996) the most common rule of thumb is that most projects consist of four to six focus groups. The typical justification for this range is that the data become saturated and little new information emerges after the first few groups. For this study five separate focus groups were therefore conducted.

Millward (2012) contended that large groups are unwieldy to manage, allow free-riding and can be apt to fragment as subgroups form. Also it may be hard to obtain a clear recording of the session: people talk at different volumes and at different distances so the discussion may be difficult to track. Krueger & Casey (2002) recommended that the size of each group should be limited to six to eight people – enough people to generate diverse ideas but not so many participants that they do not have a chance to share. For this study the size of the focus groups was therefore limited to six to eight people. Millward (2012) argued that group members should have at least some common characteristics to facilitate disclosure because of the rapport it creates among people who are otherwise unknown to each other. For this study separate focus groups were conducted with line managers, HRD professionals and senior managers. Various demographic factors – such as different genders, ages, experience – were represented in each focus group.

Survey respondents were re-contacted for illustrative qualitative material that could be quoted in conjunction with the quantitative findings. Participants, who were available in Houston, Texas during September/October 2015, were recruited by telephone or in person. During this initial recruitment people were informed about the purpose of the discussion, what the researcher was going to do with the

information, and why they were being asked to participate. Soon after the person had agreed to participate, they were sent a personalized letter outlining the aim of the study, its background, what was required from them, and confirmation of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. Each person was also contacted the day before the focus group to remind him or her of the group meeting.

4.9.2 Focus group - participants

The profile of focus group participants is shown below in Table 4.1:

Role	Line managers	Senior managers	HRD	Total	
	24	8	7	39	
Gender	Male	Female	Total		
	24	15	39		
Age group (years)	31-40	41-50	>50	Total	
	2	13	24	39	
Company experience (years)	0 - 10	11 - 20	>20	Total	
	18	12	9	39	
Where mainly raised	Australia	Europe	USA	S. America	Total
	2	4	30	3	39

Table 4.2: Profiles of focus group participants

4.9.3 Code of conduct

In accordance with the research ethics noted above in Chapter 4.5, a code of conduct to regulate the behaviour of both the researcher and any focus group participants was adopted, as follows:

- At the start of each focus group session the focus group participants were given an information sheet outlining the topic for discussion and their right to withdraw at any time,
- Permission was sought from all focus group participants for the discussions to be digitally recorded and later transcribed verbatim (omitting any information that would allow an individual to be identified),
- Focus group participants were informed that confidentiality will be maintained and no responses will be identified with individuals,
- Focus group participants were able to refuse to answer any question without giving a reason,
- Focus group invitees were able to refuse attendance of a focus group without giving a reason,
- Focus group participants were able to object to being recorded without giving a reason.

4.9.4 Questions

The researcher began by inviting four people who were familiar with the study to a two-hour brainstorming session. These people were asked to suggest questions that should be answered in the study. It was important to have the right number of questions—neither too many nor too few. In a two-hour focus group, the researcher could only expect to ask about a dozen questions. The result of too many questions would have been shallow data because participants would not have had enough time to go into depth on any of the questions.

Using the predetermined question guide, focus group participants were asked questions that addressed the purpose of the study. The same question guide was used in all of the focus groups. Most of the questions in the guide were open-ended or nondirective, in order to give the focus group participants as much latitude as possible for their responses. The question guide was meant to be suggestive and not an interviewing straitjacket, in order to enable the researcher latitude to improvise fruitful questions and pursue unanticipated lines of enquiry.

Each focus group concluded with an oral summary of the key findings and final questions, including an inquiry if the summary was correct.

4.9.5 Details of the focus group data analysis process

Wilkinson & Birmingham (2003) argued that there is no single canonical – or even preferred - way of analysing focus group data. However, most recognised methodologies apply common principles comprising both a mechanical and an interpretative component (Krippendorf, 2013). The mechanical aspect involves physically organising and subdividing the data into categories, while the interpretative component involves determining what categories were meaningful in terms of the questions being asked.

For this study the digital audio recordings of each focus group were transcribed into written form and these focus group transcripts were analysed in accordance with Thematic Analysis, as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006):

- The transcripts were initially coded by sentence and then analysed for broader themes, patterns and meaning to aid generation of the final themes.
- A theme was constructed from repeated patterns of meaning throughout the data, focusing on those elements most frequently mentioned by participants and those mentioned with some degree of intensity.
- Recurring themes were identified by ‘combing’ through the data and relating this to established literature, aiming to build a strong picture of line managers’ engagement in support of employees’ development.

Chapter 5:

Results

5.1 Outline

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the results related to the three research questions, which were:

- To explore line manager and other stakeholder perceptions of what are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors most influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development,
- To identify which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives,
- To ascertain the extent to which individuals and contextual factors also exert an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, which involves the testing of eight related hypotheses.

5.2 Statistical testing techniques

Selecting the appropriate statistical techniques to analyse data is dependent on the questions being addressed and the nature of the data collected (Pallant, 2013). In this particular study, both parametric tests comparing means and non-parametric tests comparing medians were used to analyse the questionnaire data:

- Regarding the study objective to identify which of the factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives it was proposed that a one sample t-test be used to examine the mean difference between each of the organisation, opportunity and motivation variables and the known value of the sample population mean. However, when using Shapiro-Wilks testing the collected data was found to be not normally distributed within each group of the independent variables and therefore a non-parametric statistical test was considered necessary as an alternative. The One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test is a nonparametric alternative to a one-sample t-test, which can be used when the population cannot be assumed to be normally distributed. The median is therefore the most reliable measure of central tendency. Even if the normality assumption holds, it has been shown that the efficiency of this test compared to t-test is almost 95%. The test determines whether the median of the sample is equal to some specified value.
- In order to ascertain the extent to which the organisational, ability, motivation and opportunity factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development are moderated by individual or demographic factors - one approach to testing was to use multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), which compares multivariate means of several groups and can be used when there are two or more different, but related, dependent variables. For example, in the current study it was desired to test the proposition that an independent variable, such as a line manager's age, has an influence on perceptions of organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect engagement in support of employees' development. In addition, MANOVA can be used to test whether independent variables interact to influence the dependent variables. However, as mentioned above, the collected data was found to be not normally distributed

within each group and therefore a non-parametric statistical test was considered necessary. Instead, the Mann-Whitney U test was used - it is a non-parametric statistical technique used to analyse differences between the medians of two data sets. In order for the Mann-Whitney U test to be applied, the observations may not appear in multiple categories or groups and that data referring to one subject cannot affect the data of others, and values need to be comparable in size. The fact that all values are compared makes it distinct from the t-test, which compares the sample means. The Mann-Whitney U is also used to test the null hypothesis, subject to both samples coming from the same basic set or having the same median value.

Subsequently a comparison was performed between the results derived from both the parametric and non-parametric analyses. No discernible differences were noted - when the MANOVA results for the dependent variables were considered (summarised as a table in Appendix C), the differences that reached statistical significance, using a Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of 0.03, were very similar to the Mann Whitney U test results (summarised in Table 5.22). Therefore, the evaluations included within this Chapter are derived from either an analysis of means or an analysis of medians depending on how the data could be best represented.

5.3 Study Objective 1: to understand what are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors that most influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

Using data collected by the questionnaire instrument, mean responses were calculated regarding respondents' perceptions of the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of employees' development.

- The organisation factor was designed to measure the respondent's perceptions of whether the organisational context influences line managers' engagement in support of employees' development. The organisational context can be recognised as organisational culture, structures, and conditions fostering Employee Development. The organisation factor is a function of four items that are combined into one composite scale – organisational culture, leadership direction, value articulation, and goal orientation.
- The line manager opportunity factor was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of how opportunity considerations affect line managers' engagement in support of employees' development activities. Opportunity is having available the capacity, resources and avenues necessary for line managers to engage in supporting employees' development activities. The line manager opportunity factor is a function of nine sub-items (guidance, effectiveness of HRD practices, relationship with HRD practitioners, role clarity, role conflict, work responsibilities, turnover frequency, workload, and competing demands) that are combined into three composite items – organisational support, role dissonance and ambiguity, and how work is organised.
- The line manager motivation factor was designed to measure respondents' perceptions of how motivation considerations influence line managers' engagement in supporting employees' development activities. Motivation is defined as the line manager's desire and willingness to engage in supporting employees' development activities. The line manager motivation factor is a function of nine items - performance incentives, accountability, return on investment, social exchange, intrinsic motivation, need for autonomy, need for purpose, need for relatedness, and desire for competence.

An analysis comparing the overall scores for the organisation, opportunity and motivation factors disclosed that questionnaire respondents perceived the organisation factor to be most important in influencing line managers' engagement in support of employees' development. Some focus group participants believed that this was a reflection of line managers being the first line of the management hierarchy and that "they are primarily driven by implementing whatever are higher management instructions/strategic intent".

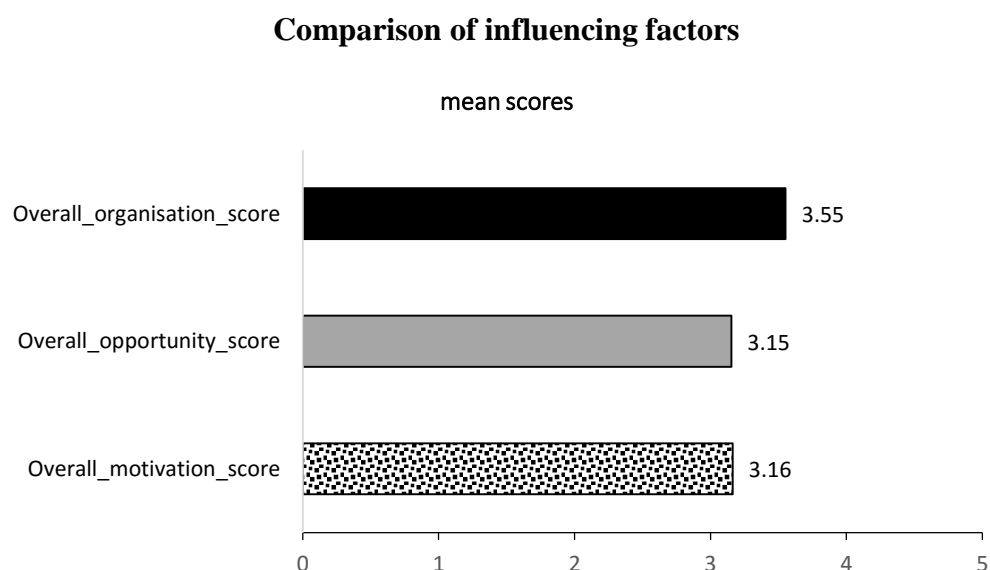


Figure 5.1: An overall view of the influence of organisation, opportunity and motivation factors –the perceptions of line managers. Response options are coded so that 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = very important, 5 = extremely important. Consolidated information – see Appendix B.1 for full data

A more detailed view of the individual items comprising organisation, opportunity and motivation factors disclosed that organisational culture, leadership direction and value articulation had the strongest direct effect, as depicted in Figure 5.2. A comparison of mean scores indicated that the most important motivation factors were perceived to be need for purpose, need for relatedness and return on investment. Opportunity factors were perceived to be of moderate importance. Interestingly several motivation factors, including performance incentives, social exchange and need for autonomy, were perceived to be of much less importance.

**Line Managers' perceptions of the importance of
organisational, opportunity and motivation factors (mean
scores)**

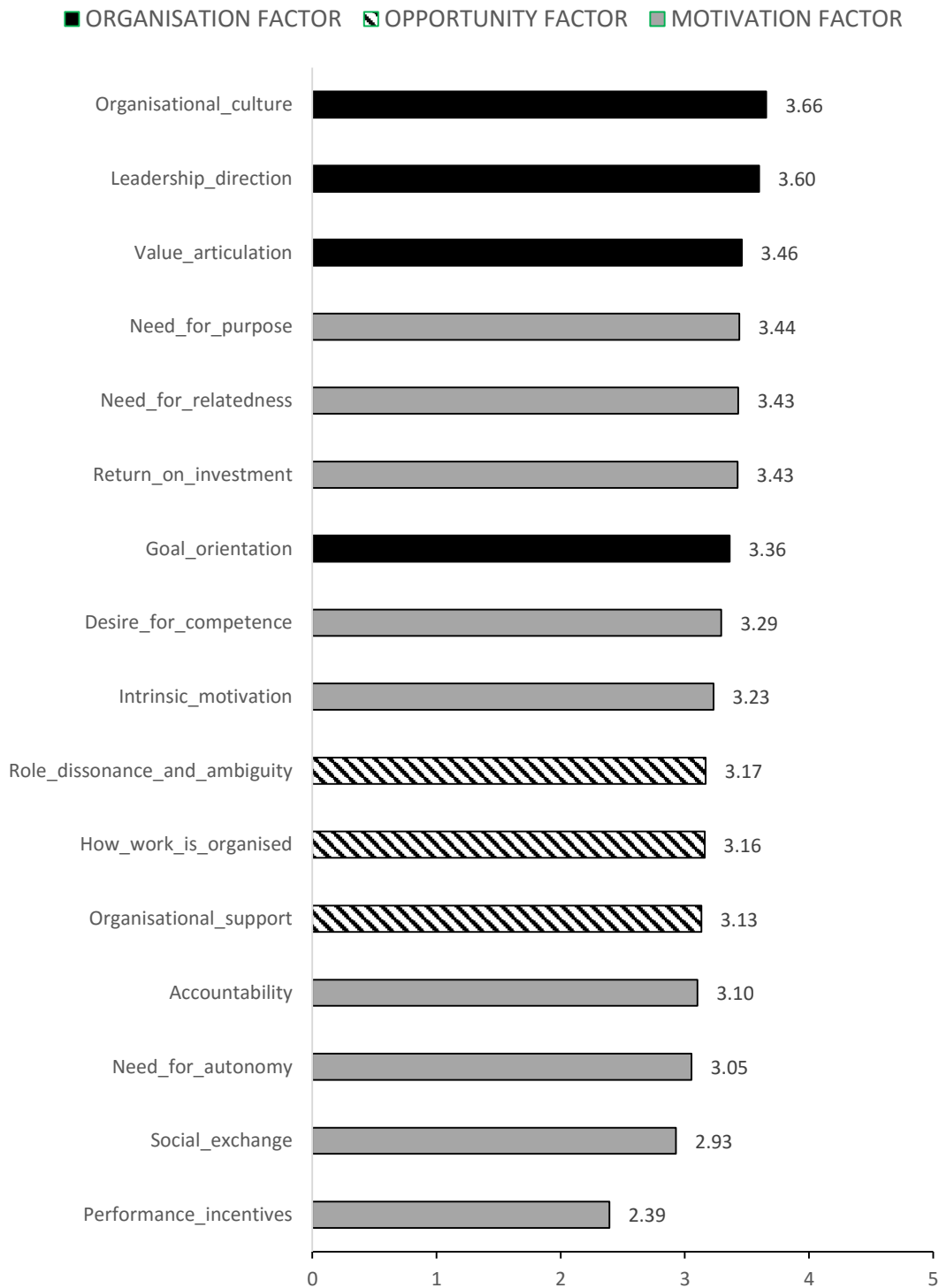


Figure 5.2: Line managers' perceptions of the importance of organisation, opportunity and motivation factors. Response options are coded so that 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = very important, 5 = extremely important. **Consolidated information – see Appendices B.2, B.3 and B.5 for full data.**

5.4 Study Objective 2: to identify which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives.

The One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were conducted on the sixteen individual variables comprising organisation, opportunity and motivation factors to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: 'The median of each organisation, opportunity and motivation variable is equal to the median of the overall sample (calculated as 3.184)'

H₁: 'The median of each organisation, opportunity and motivation variable is not equal to the median of the overall sample (calculated as 3.184)'

As shown in Table 5.1, it was found that the medians for organisational culture, leadership direction, value articulation, goal orientation, performance incentives, return on investment, social exchange, need for purpose, need for relatedness and need for competence were statistically significantly different from the calculated overall median. Although these results showed statistically significant differences, it does not necessarily mean that the differences encountered were enough to be practically significant. Regarding these results, focus group participants commented that none of the individual items, except performance incentives, stood out from the rest. Some of the focus group participants remarked that this perhaps indicated there is not really a single lever that the organisation can pull to have significant impact on line managers' engagement. From the perspective of most focus group participants this result could have occurred for two main reasons. Firstly, a lot of the factors are not independent – there are linkages/crossovers between them, they blend together, "there is not a lot of daylight between them". This might have led to this similar ranking. Secondly, questionnaire respondents could have regarded these factors as all being part of the overall toolbox to achieve line manager engagement. "It's not one or other of these tools, but all of them are required to some degree", with no one element have significantly more or less importance than another. Similarly, focus group participants also pondered on why the mean scores were in a relatively narrow range, generally between 3.0 and 4.0 for a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. Possibly this could be because the list of items had been drawn from what the literature review had already indicated as being of consequence.

Null hypothesis	N	Median	Sig	Decision
The median of Organisational culture equals 3.184	267	3.67	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Leadership direction equals 3.184	267	3.67	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Value articulation equals 3.184	267	3.50	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Goal orientation equals 3.184	267	3.33	0.023	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Organisational support equals 3.184	267	3.25	0.373	
The median of Role dissonance and ambiguity equals 3.184	267	3.33	0.202	
The median of How work is organised equals 3.184	267	3.20	0.615	
The median of Accountability equals 3.184	267	3.00	0.896	
The median of Performance incentives equals 3.184	267	2.33	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Return on investment equals 3.184	267	3.50	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Social exchange equals 3.184	267	3.00	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Need for purpose equals 3.184	267	3.50	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Need for autonomy equals 3.184	267	3.00	0.184	
The median of Need for relatedness equals 3.184	267	3.33	0.000	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Need for competence equals 3.184	267	3.50	0.001	Reject the null hypothesis
The median of Intrinsic motivation equals 3.184	267	3.33	0.975	

The significance level is .05

Table 5.1: Results of One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests

5.4.1 Organisation factor

Focus group participants emphasised the importance of fostering a development environment within the organisation, that includes an informed leadership that supports true development. Some focus group participants also discussed this in relation to similar experiences of an organisation deploying and sustaining health, environment and safety programmes – that “unless you have established the right culture, get commitment from the leadership, if people don’t understand and don’t see the value then it becomes just another program and pure compliance (people don’t believe in it and just do because it’s part of scorecard metrics)”.

Organisational culture

Most focus group participants believed that organisational factors, and perhaps mainly the culture, are what everything else is built from. Example quotations that emerged during the focus groups are:

- *“An environment where an employee and/or line manager that encourages long-term development and training is the most important. Everything else is tactical.”*
- *“Integrating Employee Development into the company culture.”*
- *“Freedom to fail - a culture where rewards are associated with innovation regardless of whether the innovation was successful or not.”*
- *“There is a prevailing culture – probably this means that to have become a line manager you have been relatively successful in adapting to that culture.”*

Leadership direction

According to some of the focus group participants, line managers may want to engage in Employee Development but, “if the focus is to get the work done, if leadership is not really saying that it is important although you still need to do it, then the organisation is not enabling or supporting that to happen”. Other example quotations are:

- *“Senior managers truly set the tone.”*
- *“Acknowledgement and commitment from leadership is key.”*
- *“Everyone including leaders and managers attend learning events or “lead by example”.”*
- *“Reinforcement of demonstration of appropriate development behaviours. Management culture must be based on principles which strive for positive reinforcement of good development behaviours.”*
- *“Buy-in from upper management is very important for the (Employee Development) plan to work.”*
- *“For management to provide full backing and support to the effort.”*

- *“If the organisation’s leaders don’t regard Employee Development as important, why should I?”*

Value articulation

Most focus group participants agreed that line managers would accept an Employee Development culture if it makes sense. Additionally, many focus group participants reported that line managers think that if the organisation doesn’t value Employee Development then why should they go “above and beyond”. Illustrative quotations of these points are:

- *“Line managers/employees must know that long term development actually matters.”*
- *The organisation needs to make clear the long-term vision for Employee Development and how it correlates with it’s strategic vision.”*
- *“Pending “Crew change” culture over the past five years has been an important factor. That took development out of the normal case and made it a strategic intent.”*
- *“Making sure that everyone understands the reasons for Employee Development.”*
- *“Line managers need to be provided with an understanding company future objectives and structure.”*
- *“Line managers need to understand how this is linked into the bottom line, so they can clearly see how they can contribute to higher performance and ultimately common goals and bottom line.”*
- *“It’s important for line managers to have an understanding of how Employee Development fits with the organisation’s future objectives and structure.”*
- *“There needs to be a clear understanding of corporate importance in development of employees for the future.”*
- *“If I feel value in this activity compared to other challenges (regardless of the money aspect) – what is it? Maybe in this organisation, because of the investment in people culture, the value in doing the activity exceeds the reward an individual will get.”*
- *“People want to know why they are doing the activity, there is a point to it, and they’re getting something back from it.”*

Goal orientation

Focus group participants discussed the tension between doing something for the greater good over the long term versus doing something for immediate returns. All the focus group participants agreed that if the organisation doesn’t explicitly support Employee Development then there’s not the driving force for line managers to engage – the focus for them will then revert to “getting the work done”. Example quotations are:

- *“There needs to be clarity about the perceived overall value of the development versus getting daily work done; perception of what employee development consists of (having to spend a great amount of time to develop specific activities versus seeing On the Job as a development activity).”*

- *“Line managers need to have an understanding of training versus development.”*
- *“The biggest challenge is balancing the individual need for growth with the project objectives as higher level management is who allows for moves and approves budgets for training.”*
- *“Awareness of the value of long term development versus training.”*
- *“Disassociate cost of development to immediate benefits, development expenses are not the same as buying a gadget.”*

5.4.2 Opportunity factor

From the perspective of the focus group participants, organisation factors can greatly influence but alone do not guarantee line managers’ engagement – there are still “people who say they are too busy”. Therefore, in respect of this, it is very important to minimise job demands and provide the necessary resources to make this job as straightforward as possible. Example quotes that emerged during the focus group discussions were:

Organisational support

<p>Guidance</p> <p>(Clear direction regarding the use of HRD policies and practices)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Whether there is a clear, mapped support system that helps line managers.”</i> □ <i>“Line managers also need additional guidance and supervision from their managers.”</i> □ <i>“Guidance from HRD has seemed to be very high-level, time-intensive and not effective. Suggest coming up with solutions that empower employees to get training instead of more formal processes that don't add a lot of value.”</i>
<p>Effectiveness of HRD practices</p> <p>(The suitability of the organisation’s HRD practices to help manage Employee Development activities)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Most often, development for experienced staff is self-motivated and supported by the line manager rather than part of a structured program.”</i> □ <i>“The requirement for the employees to update their development plans annually and meet a certain deadline as well as the requirement to review the development plan with the employee to understand their career goals and plan developmental opportunities that can help them achieve their goals.”</i> □ <i>“Structured plans like the use of performance evaluations and development plans are very beneficial to developing other employees and understanding other's goals.”</i> □ <i>“It is extremely important to have employee development tools which are both scalable and appropriate to the country/region.”</i>

Relationship with HRD practitioners (The service level, trust level and knowledge level that HRD practitioners can be relied upon to provide in support and partnership of line manager's development activities)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Assuring distinct roles and responsibilities for employee development between HRD and line management. Who is in charge?"</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Robust support functions within HR to support career development assignments and to ensure that training programs are aligned with identified employee needs."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Lack of ownership by HR can be a problem."</i>
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Role dissonance and ambiguity

Role clarity (Clear policies regarding role expectations and the division of responsibilities and authority between various stakeholders)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>"If this responsibility seems like an "add-on", then it will often fall to the bottom of the list in terms of priority."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Clarity on expectations for line management and employee to moderate personal agendas."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"A line manager's capability to support and/or develop an employee given "dual reporting" relationships between projects and functions, which happen all the time in project organisations."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Clear expectation in role and responsibilities."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Recognition from leadership that this is part of their role is critical to success."</i>
Role conflict (Incongruity between operational and developmental role expectations, including the difference between expectations of employees compared with line managers)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>"The value that my manager places on these activities versus my other deliverables."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Alignment between the expectations regarding employees' development between the line manager and his/her manager."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"When most learning happens on the job the most important fact is finding opportunities for one employee to get involved with and learn something new. This implies that 2 parties will be involved the now low productivity employee and the person coaching them at the new skill. The only organisation support is recognition that this time is necessary and important."</i>

How work is organised

Work responsibilities (The extent to which the line manager needs to divide time between managerial type tasks and non-managerial technical type tasks)	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>"Size of the organisation plays a part in how line managers can decide about Employee Development."</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>"The primary impact to my participation in activities to support employees' development is the overall work that has to be done; I still handle quite a bit of day to day "technical" work."</i>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Billing models. (having to be "billable" can influence the amount of time spent on development.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Line managers are also expected to do work as well as supervise (and support their employees’ development!).”</i>
Turnover frequency (The rate at which employees change positions within the organisation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“The time an employee stays in his/her position under same manager supervision.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Changing jobs functional areas also has an impact, by the time you learn how to manage employees, what’s available and how to manage employees’ development in a particular area, and then you are moved on.”</i>
Workload (The amount of work that needs to be done, creating an exposure to demands that require more time, energy and commitment than one can provide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being sufficiently staffed. One of my prior roles, staffing levels were not sufficient for everyday activities and as a result adequate time could not be spent on Employee Development as I would have liked.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Having time available to support this business goal.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“The perception of a line manager that inadequate time is available (due to other commitments) to allow for meaningful employee engagement (e.g., too many other deliverables to get out the door). This can be made more acute by having too many direct reports.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Time struggle between current job and activities that development an employee and then usage of the knowledge gained.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Line managers need to be allowed dedicated time.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Number of employees per line manager (i.e., does the line manager have the time to effectively develop his/her number of direct reports?).”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being given the time for Employee Development.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Not enough time or resources.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“The line manager needs to spend a lot of time with individuals to properly support their development.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“There is no time, high workload.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Projects staffed so low that development support is pushed into (discretionary) personal time.”</i>
Competing demands (The difficulty of prioritising work within competing job demands and available resources)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Concerns on budget and business needs can trump personal development especially when needed across business unit boundaries.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Support from management, tolerance for time to learn a job/ skill.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“(Organisational) commitment to provide funding and time to allow participation in development activities by employees.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Competition with work priorities.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Budget constraints.”</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“An organisation providing resources (time/training) to allow Employee Development.”</i> □ <i>“Making funding available for training and access to on the job training is important.”</i> □ <i>“Visible support in term of resources needed (budget and time) for employees’ development.”</i> □ <i>“Formal development system endorsed by Senior Management in the annual budget allocation.”</i> □ <i>“Need to identify business conditions that explicitly discourage development (e.g. no training budget, management not approving local training courses).”</i> □ <i>“Funding, and balancing time needed for development with day-day work deliverables.”</i> □ <i>“Competing priorities with other goals for the company/department.”</i> □ <i>“There are many competing demands – so how do you make this (Employee Development) more visible?”</i>
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Although not specifically highlighted in the analysis of the questionnaire data, focus group participants believed that a significant challenge to line managers’ engagement in support of employees’ development comes from how work is organised – in particular workload and competing demands. These job demands prompt a tendency among line managers to allocate their own scarce resources for development issues to where they get the “biggest bang for the buck”. This could be presented as a coping mechanism whereby line managers fulfil their responsibility for Employee Development, but also preserve their energy. For example, if the time spent coaching employees on their development resulted in no obvious gains - then line managers invested less energy in these actions.

Focus group participants discussed the criteria used by line managers to determine how to invest their energy and resources when faced with this challenge. Some focus group participants regarded the level of engagement of the employee to be a determining factor: “Line managers are very supportive of employees who show a willingness to grow”; “It depends on the employee’s commitment – Is the employee interested?”; “If you see the employee putting in the effort to improve – it’s easier to help them if they want it”; “I don’t spend a lot of time with a person who is going nowhere and doesn’t care”; “If it’s a person who can’t or won’t change, I’m not even going to try”. “If the employee is not turned on/interested, that has a negative impact. Then you look at people who are fresh, hungry and enthusiastic”. Some comments leaned towards leveraging the stronger performers and spending less time on weaker performers: “Due to time constraints, line

managers may tend to devote more time to hi-pots, future leaders. Poor performers can take a big chunk of your time”; “A lot of development is on-the-job, this therefore consumes line manager time. Tend to allocate resources to individuals who have more chance to succeed”; Don’t waste your time on underperforming employees – they’re not going to get you anywhere (return on investment). You’ll probably get more out of high performing employees”; “Lean towards the thrivers rather than the strugglers”. Alternatively, some focus group participants also talked about balancing the need to help the weakest link to bring the whole team up. Other points of view included: “Don’t focus on underperformers (they won’t get there anyway), don’t focus on the high performers (they will get there anyway), focus on the middle”; “Irrespective of who needs it most I have to treat my direct reports with an equal hand”; “If someone is not performing do I need to reward them with development? Or do I prefer to support people who are doing well in their job?”; “Can the employee assimilate training and keep up with his work”; “If a development need is easy to articulate then it may be easier to get behind it. Ambiguous/unclear development needs may tend to get left behind”.

5.4.3 Motivation factor

Analysis of the questionnaire data disclosed that motivation due to controlled regulation scored lower than motivation from autonomous regulation:

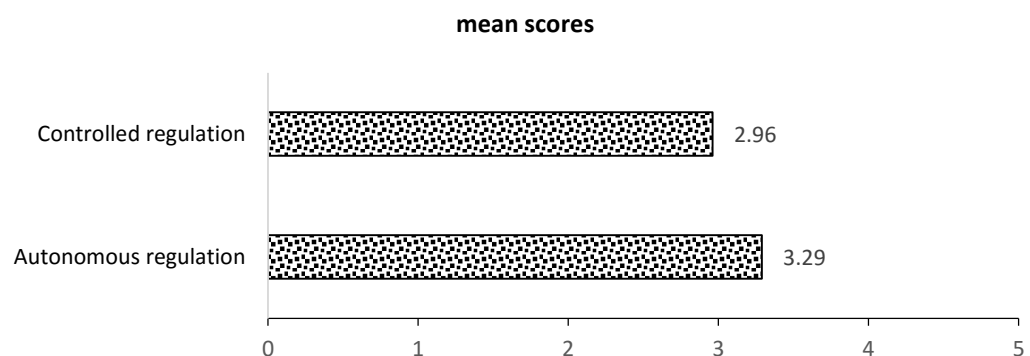


Figure 5.3: The influence of motivation factors (autonomous regulation versus controlled regulation) Response options are coded so that 1 = not important, 2 = slightly important, 3 = moderately important, 4 = very important, 5 = extremely important. **Consolidated information** – see Appendix B.4 for full data.

The focus group participants generally regarded these scores as being reflective of the prevailing organisation factors – culture, leadership direction and goal orientation.

“These scores show us that line managers are saying that, in this organisation, they are not going to be recognized for their contribution to developing employees. We talk a lot about holding people accountable, but if the organisation really cared about developing people then perhaps there should be some financial or accountability consequence.”

Many focus group participants reported that there seems to be less importance attached to developing capability compared with line managers’ other activities. “We have four leader expectations, including one about building capability. They’re all supposed to hold equal weight, but in practice the organisation is results focused - accountability and reward are really based on achievement of business objectives.” Similarly, other focus group participants asked “do we just pay lip-service to this activity having accountability?”, while some believed that “a line manager’s performance in supporting employees’ development would only be an incremental part of his/her overall performance evaluation and he/she knows it!”

Focus group participants also considered other issues that impact the effectiveness of accountability as a motivating factor. Linked to role dissonance and ambiguity (see Opportunity factors) – “is it the employee’s responsibility or the line manager?” “Is there a clear message?” “We are saying “employees are responsible for their own development” and also that line managers have a role by supporting it. Does this part of our process/culture affect scores on accountability?”

Given that “this is an organisation where the carrot or stick has limited impact on line managers’ engagement in support of employees’ development”, it is perhaps not surprising that any engagement is more influenced by autonomous regulation.

Accountability

Notwithstanding this, there were still many comments about the importance of accountability as a motivation driver:

- *“There should be periodic follow up with clearly stated metrics is a good tool to track progress and responsibilities.”*
- *“A verification process to measure success and status of Employee Development is needed”.*
- *The fact that this task is a requirement - make it imperative to go through the development plans and set tangible goals.”*
- *“Holding line managers truly accountable for team performance.”*
- *“Impact or lack thereof in supporting employees' development on performance evaluations and salary actions.”*
- *“Ensuring that responsibilities are supported by the system to reinforce accountability for Employee Development. Too many times Employee Development is aspirational without direct accountability.”*
- *“Line managers should be made accountable for ensuring that their employees are developed per the organisation's processes / requirements.”*
- *“Line managers should be held accountable for their role in developing their employees.”*
- *“The organisation has to set clear goals and objectives for an employee’s development and ensure there are milestones to measure progress against.”*
- *“What gets measured gets done.”*
- *“Reported metrics that show the effectiveness of a line manager in developing his/her direct reports or others within his/her organisation.”*
- *“Hold line managers accountable for achieving specific Employee Development objectives.”*
- *“Include in performance evaluations for line managers and employees.”*
- *“The ability to develop people should be seen as a measure of a line manager’s performance within the organisations review systems and performance metrics. Otherwise there is little incentive.”*
- *“Clear expectations of what "Employee Development" looks like, so that it can be measured and tracked.”*
- *“Extremely important is incorporating this into a formal review process.”*
- *“Linkage of Employee Development to a line manager's performance evaluation.”*
- *“If line managers don’t feel accountable for supporting Employee Development it won’t be given much attention and the employee and organisation suffer.”*

Performance incentives

In this particular organisation there aren’t any specific financial incentives for this activity. No-one in the focus groups had worked in an organisation where performance incentives were part of the compensation. So without working in that type of environment it was hard to envisage the impact. But some had seen other organisations where performance incentives were available and were seen to work.

Focus groups participants generally believed that line managers in this particular organisation wouldn’t find (small) performance incentives sufficient to motivate them to engage in this activity. This could be because the in prevailing (older) demographic, line managers are comfortable with their salaries. Thinking about

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, it seems like the need for money has been met already so that motivation factor diminishes in this list.

Some focus group participants believed that the motivational impact of performance incentives may be different in different countries because of less beneficial economic conditions compared to the US/UK. There could also be some linkage to when the survey was taken – if the Oil and Gas business continues to deteriorate (leading to lower salary increases and bonuses) then financial incentives may become more important.

Despite this, quotations by several focus group participants pointed to a belief that the prospect of performance incentives may be a motivation driver:

- *“An open (public) recognition of the effort one is putting in to develop employees and the results by way of improved performance.”*
- *“A reward system that recognizes line managers who do spend time on development of team members’ positive reinforcement/recognition.”*
- *“Line managers should be rewarded for being good at this.”*
- *“Lack of formal incentive for line managers to really do a good job of Employee Development.”*
- *“I don't perceive any direct reward for myself for better development.”*
- *“There should be recognition for time and effort spent developing others.”*
- *“Impacting employees’ development is rarely rewarded to rank and file mentors and line managers.”*
- *“Could line managers be rewarded on their performance evaluations for developing targeted employees and moving them into a new role?”*
- *“Line managers really being rewarded for Employee Development, with hard results expected on their performance evaluation.”*
- *“If line managers believed that the organisation truly values/supports development, and they were rewarded for doing so, they would be more willing to invest the time necessary.”*

Return on investment

Focus group discussions around return on investment as a motivation driver also seemed to be linked to the organisation's goal orientation - “we want to achieve results and if developing people helps achieve those results then we will be motivated”. Focus group participants believed that “line managers are looking for people to perform now and not necessarily thinking one or two assignments ahead”. In addition, “there is a tendency for line managers to hold back support for development if they know that an employee will be switching out to a new team”. Nevertheless, most agreed that “you should look at it on a longer term”.

Focus group participants also mentioned that this focus on return on investment means that employees may not get developed to their full potential because it takes too long and the returns don't immediately come back to the line manager – this is detrimental both to the organisation and to the individual employees.

Most focus group participants agreed that improving people, while still getting the work done is also a reflection of the line manager and “when people find out that you are a line manager that really cares and allows people to develop then you are going to have people who want to work for you.” Additionally, “as a line manager, you can differentiate yourself with employees by being a developer – good people will want to join your team”. This is especially important where there are scarce human resources available.

- *“Sometimes there appears to be conflict of interest between employees' desire to change job for personal development versus line manager retaining the employee for extended period of time to ensure delivery of business goals are met.”*
- *“Developing people will enable the line manager to have a team able to do their jobs.”*
- *“The best way to influence the line managers' participation is to involve them in assessing the risk to their team meeting their business objectives if the employees are not developed appropriately to achieve the team objectives.”*
- *“Some line managers feel threatened if their employees develop themselves and leave for better opportunities. They think they have to restart developing the fresh people from scratch.”*
- *“I feel a personal obligation to develop and provide growth opportunities to my staff and this also creates a good working environment with increased employee commitment.”*
- *“The possibility of increasing the initiative levels of my employees.”*
- *“The line manager believes that Employee Development is required in order to have a high performing team.”*
- *“Team productivity improves with competence.”*
- *“Developing individuals also enables you to do your own job rather than doing their job”*

Social exchange

Most focus group participants agreed that “there is a struggle for line managers if they are supposed to do something for employees in a certain way, but that is not happening from their own line managers”.

- *“The organisation needs to figure out a way for older less promoted line managers, with bad experiences with current or former line managers to maintain an open mind and be more positive about developing careers of younger generations.”*

- *“There needs to be a clear understanding of whether line managers are within the same system for development. Sometime it seems that line managers are plateaued and no further development available for them?”*
- *“Line managers are not being developed by senior managers.”*
- *“Line managers are influenced by their previous experience as an employee with attitudes toward processes built around Employee Development.”*
- *“I don't see any efforts by my bosses to provide me with career development.”*
- *“It is critical that the immediate line manager truly wants the employee to advance and is not threatened by their team's success - confident leadership.”*

Need for purpose

Focus group participants generally believed that line managers (especially those in the older demographic) are motivated by a need for purpose – to develop people for the overall organisation for the long term. They are motivated to help build capabilities for the sake of the organisation – “this organisation needs this”. They are also motivated because like to see people grow. Some reported that they get a sense of accomplishment from helping staff to develop.

- *“I believe it builds a stronger workforce, which makes us more competitive.”*
- *“It's the right thing to do.”*
- *“Realizing the goals and seeing/experiencing the achievement of the results.”*
- *“Good for the corporation to develop employees.”*
- *“It is mainly leaving a legacy. To feel that one has done something by contributing for the increase others capabilities and knowledge.”*
- *“Building a better more effective workplace is the only motivation needed. We build skills in our people because we see the need for those skills in the future. The payoff comes when the future organisation is stronger.”*
- *“I do it because it helps the organisation/the individual even though it does nothing for me”.*

Need for relatedness

- *“I think that the people you work with are some sort of family and genuine interest in the progress of my subordinates.”*
- *“Some kind of personal connection between the two individuals with the line manager desire to sponsor the employee.”*

Need for competence

- *“If I need to do something I want to do it well.”*

Intrinsic motivation

Some focus group participants reported that they do get personal satisfaction when they see people grow. “I am really proud when I see an employee achieve something, but it doesn’t affect my own self (in a negative way) if no development happens.” Other focus group participants regarded this activity as being divorced from intrinsic motivation because it is part of the line manager’s job description and therefore must be done?

- ☐ “One’s own personal satisfaction can be a motivator.”
- ☐ “I participate because I have a passion for it.”
- ☐ “The reward of an employee’s skill set improving and the employee feeling better about themselves and value to the organisation.”
- ☐ “Job satisfaction providing motivation because of value added to company.”
- ☐ “Taking responsibility for Employee Development is motivated more by discretionary inclination than by organisationally imposed mandate.”

5.4.4 Ability factor

The line manager ability factor was designed to measure respondents’ perceptions of how ability considerations relate to line managers’ engagement in support of employees’ development. The line manager ability factor consists of twenty items, which belong to one of three dimensions – assessing, challenging and supporting - and align with the Noer (2005) Triangle Coaching Model (see Chapter 2.13.1).

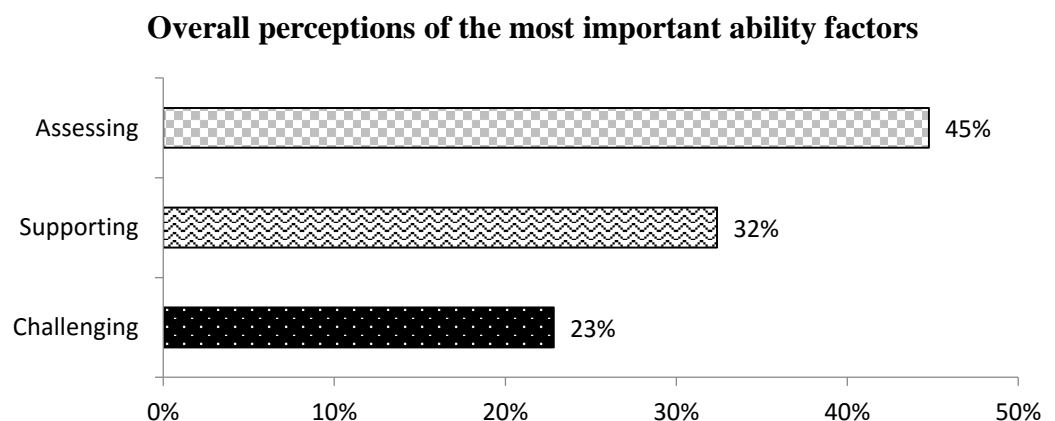


Figure 5.4: Line managers’ perceptions of the most important ability factors (overall view).
Consolidated information – see Appendix B.6 for full data.

Questionnaire respondents were requested to identify what they perceived to be the five most important competencies, from the twenty items listed, for line managers to successfully support employees' development. Analysis of the results indicated that competencies from the Assessing Dimension were most often identified as being important and constituted 45% of all responses. Competencies from the Challenging Dimension were least often identified as being important.

A recurring theme throughout the focus groups was that the organisational context (organisational climate, leadership direction, value articulation, and goal orientation) influences line managers' perceptions about what tasks are important; but focus group participants additionally noted that the organisational context also persuades line managers how a task should be approached – “it's not just about achieving a result, there is also an expectation around the kind of behaviours required to achieve it”. Focus group participants uniformly characterised the study organisation as being “consensus-driven” and most believed this in large part explained why skills in the assessing and supporting dimensions were overall found to be more important than skills from the challenging dimension.

The data also suggested that questionnaire respondents perceived two competencies from the Assessing Dimension to be of most importance – “drawing out insights” and “planning, previewing and anticipating”. From the Supporting Dimension, “collaborating, negotiating with peers to create opportunities for Employee Development” and “inquiring” were perceived to be important abilities. However, from the Challenging Dimension, “confronting issues/saying how it is” and “facilitating action” were two of the least selected items perceived as being important for line managers supporting employees' development.

Detailed perceptions of the most important ability factors

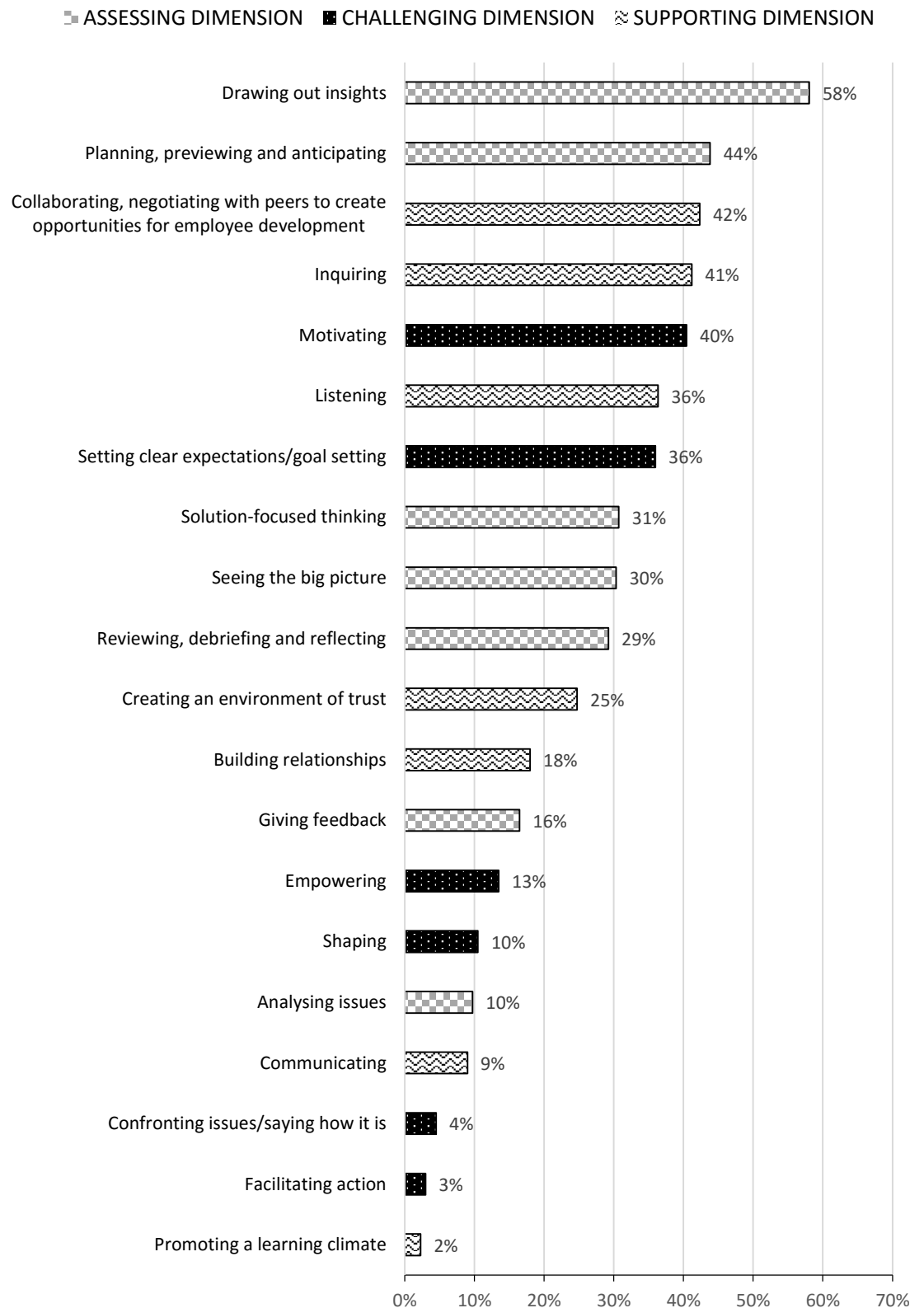


Figure 5.5: Line managers' perceptions of the most important ability factors (detailed view).
Consolidated information – see Appendix B.6 for full data.

Focus group participants reflected on the reasons why some of the identified competencies were considered less important by questionnaire respondents:

- “Promoting a learning climate” – focus group participants questioned whether line managers believe that they are responsible for this. Maybe line managers see this task as being the job of the organisation/HRD practitioners. Line managers may also regard it as being too outside of their normal work. It was also noted there is a difference between just sending an employee to training versus providing active and ongoing support for an employee’s on-the-job development (where the line manager should be more involved).
- “Facilitating action” – focus group participants pondered whether this low score related to an oft-repeated mantra within this particular organisation that “employees are responsible for their own development” and this then leads to line managers denying responsibility.
- “Confronting issues/saying how it is” – focus group participants believed that this reflected the culture of this particular organisation, which was characterised as consensus-driven. Focus group participants with experience from other organisations noted that they would expect this item to score higher in their previous organisations – some also conjectured that “saying how it is” would rate higher, but skills like “collaboration” would score lower. Some focus group participants believed that new hires notice this (lack of confrontation) when they arrive, but then they adapt to this organisation’s culture.
- Also related to “confronting issues/saying how it is” – some focus group participants reported that employees are enthusiastic about receiving “feedback”, but it is often not forthcoming in this culture. It was agreed that this likely hinders employees’ development. In respect of this, it was also mentioned that line managers are comfortable having development conversations with employees who are middle of the road, but it becomes more difficult if employees are either extremely enthusiastic or disinterested about development.
- In addition, focus group participants discussed whether line managers really have sufficient information to “see the big picture”? Perhaps line managers tend to have a narrow focus, have come up in a particular line of work and don’t even know how to look outside of this. Additionally, there is not

usually an active dialogue between senior managers and line managers about overall business direction, future skill requirements and the linkage with employees' development. Focus group participants remarked that employees probably hope that line managers are privy to these necessary insights.

- According to some focus group participants, “maybe it’s not that line managers are too busy (opportunity factor), but it’s that they don’t have the necessary skills” (ability factor). Pursuing this line of thought, focus group participants asked themselves “are we adequately training our line managers in being better able to support employees’ development?”. Focus group participants considered that an organisation can train competence in mechanical tasks but building line managers’ soft skills is a more difficult area. Focus group participants also reported that there was a lack of soft skill development for line managers and too much emphasis on processes, which could stem from the organisation being technology and engineering based. Not supporting line managers to change behaviours and improve soft skills also affects the line manager/employee relationship. In addition, it was noted that some of the necessary soft skills would benefit peer to peer relationships.
- Questions were also raised about “how do line managers get the right skills?” and “is this a learned task?” Focus group participants generally agreed that “it’s a learned behaviour from experience supplemented by training”. Focus group participants believed that “often learning comes from how your past line managers behaved, good and bad - you learn what not to do and vice versa” and “if you balance the two then you get a good tool set”.
- Across all of the focus groups it was pondered “what are the expectations for line managers – what does good look like?” Participants believed that line managers focus on what they think is the right thing to do supplemented by ad-hoc feedback.

Overall, focus group participants agreed that the twenty items included in the ability factor properly represented the essential competencies for line managers to support employees’ development. Example quotes that emerged during the focus group discussions about the importance of each item were:

Drawing out insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Clearly understand where your employee is at in order to determine where they need to go. In addition, ensure you understand the employee's aspirations.”</i> □ <i>“Understanding and respecting the development level wanted by employee.”</i> □ <i>“Need to recognize potential and identify realistic aiming points for employees.”</i> □ <i>“Comprehending what are the employee goals and motivators.”</i>
Planning, previewing and anticipation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“It's important to build a team resource loaded work plan, and then assess each employee's ability to deliver their responsibilities within the plan. The Employee Development necessary to address the risk of their not being able to deliver the plan will then be easier for the line manager to support.”</i>
Collaborating, negotiating with peers to create opportunities for Employee Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Getting resources outside of primary business unit for career development.”</i> □ <i>“Networking in/out of the organisation at various levels.”</i> □ <i>“Ability to reach out to Subject Matter Experts through intra and inter functional channels to track down best practice information that is needed to guide the employees correctly.”</i> □ <i>“Collaborating with other line managers to organise development options in other intra and inter functional functions that integrate with theirs.”</i> □ <i>“Persuasion, selling, entrepreneurship.”</i>
Inquiring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“My knowledge of the cultural background of the employee. People's response to issues and communication styles are sometimes largely influenced by the cultural background. Sometimes the actions of people are misunderstood due to a lack of understanding of their culture.”</i>
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“For learning, I found that making a challenge personal and fun - makes the employee work extra hard to figure out the "problem" I gave him.”</i>
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“By listening you get employees' trust.”</i> □ <i>“Listening transmits the fact that you care.”</i>
Setting clear expectations/ goal setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Communicating expectations along with giving feedback are basic competency tools that should be kept together.”</i> □ <i>“Setting up opportunities with clear goals and expectations.”</i>
Solution-focused thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>“Identifying and agreeing competency gaps, identifying areas of individual interest, aligning</i>

	<p><i>organisational requirement, and creating opportunities to fill those areas of interest.”</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Initiative to come up with ideas/solutions to problems.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being able to help identify gaps and know programs to help close those gaps.”</i>
Seeing the big picture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Knowledge of opportunities within the organisation.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Organisational knowledge: ability to be able to guide on employees’ future growth based on ‘what’s really out there’.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Understanding of the organisation and its unwritten rules in terms of success.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Broader/wider business acumen - how/why it’s important to contribute linked to the bottom line.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Organisational knowledge: equipping line managers with knowledge on ‘what’s out there’ in the organisation.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Sometimes it is not clear in line managers’ immediate environment where the business is heading. How do they properly prepare their reports for the next position?”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Awareness of potential development opportunities.”</i>
Reviewing, debriefing and reflecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Line managers need to recognize the need to engage with employees both before and after any learning activity. This sets expectations for what is accomplished during the activity and validates that the learning was accomplished or that other actions are needed.”</i>
Creating an environment of trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“To me, communicating and building trust are key in supporting employee’s development.”</i>
Building relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being personable.”</i>
Giving feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Performance coaching skills is a key competency for a manager with ‘people’ responsibilities.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Line managers should recognize and reward employees’ development achievements.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Recognition and reward for good or excellent work.”</i>
Empowering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Empowering others to complete the work is key.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“I think that empowerment and providing latitude to succeed, and accepting a limited risk of failure to learn from is key for Employee Development.”</i>
Shaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“A key competency for me is for line manager to have the ability to recognize and help the employee recognize their key talent and help guide them towards developing that talent.”</i>

Analysing issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being able to evaluate the individual's talents and capability.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Understanding of an employee’s strengths and opportunity areas for development”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Identifying competency gaps.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Knowledge and understanding of an employee's competency, performance and experience.”</i>
Communicating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Good communications.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Communication is integrated into many of the other skills listed.”</i>
Confronting issues/ saying how it is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Line managers need to be able to manage employees’ expectations.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being able to give constructive feedback when employees have unrealistic goals.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Saying how it is when confronting issues may not be well received depending on one's personality and/or state.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Sometimes this can involve giving difficult feedback because it may not be what they believe they should do, for instance, if they are not leadership material.”</i>
Facilitating action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Providing opportunities/challenges for growth and development.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Enabling opportunities and providing necessary tools and resources.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Setting development plans.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“The skill to "sell" the required Employee Development activities to higher management and also to employees is important.”</i>
Promoting a learning climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“An understanding of the most effective ways in which adults develop.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Willing to take a risk on less experienced employees for them to gain the required experience.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Tolerance is necessary from a line manager for individuals to develop.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Being open to a continuous learning process oneself.”</i> <input type="checkbox"/> <i>“Take measures to ensure the entire line management team is aware of the development mechanisms that can further support the development program. Often times, if the leadership is not aware, employees run the risk of being "dinged" in performance evaluation when mistakes are made.”</i>

5.5 Study Objective 3: to ascertain the extent to which the organisational, ability, motivation and opportunity factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development are moderated by individual or demographic factors.

One approach to testing this study objective was to use independent samples t-testing. This test is used when the dependent variable is a continuous interval/ratio scale variable (such as total self-esteem) and the independent variable is a two-level categorical variable (such as gender). The independent samples t-test can be used even if sample sizes are very small, as long as the variables within each group are normally distributed and the variation of scores within the two groups is equal (no reliable differences). However, as mentioned above, the collected data was found to be not normally distributed within each group and therefore a non-parametric statistical test was considered necessary. Instead, the Mann-Whitney U test was used - it is a non-parametric statistical technique used to analyse differences between the medians of two data sets. In order for the Mann-Whitney U test to be applied, the observations may not appear in multiple categories or groups and that data referring to one subject cannot affect the data of others, and values need to be comparable in size. The fact that all values are compared makes it distinct from the t-test, which compares the sample means. The Mann-Whitney U is also used to test the null hypothesis, subject to both samples coming from the same basic set or having the same median value.

The research hypotheses have varying numbers of respondee groups. For example, Hypothesis 2 has two groups – male and female, whereas Hypothesis 8 consists of ten groups. However, on examination of the results data it was apparent that groups could be combined so that each hypothesis could be presented by two groups, as shown in Table 5.2.

		Number of responses by group		Mann- Whitney U test groupings
Hypothesis 1: role	Line manager	267		267
	Senior manager	34		73
	HRD practitioner	39		
340				
Hypothesis 2: gender	Male	86		86
	Female	181		181
267				
Hypothesis 3: organisation type	Project-based experience	147		147
	Routine organisation experience	96		96
	Other	24		
267				
Hypothesis 4: function	Facilities engineering	128		128
	Supply Chain Management	32		139
	Health, Environment, Safety	24		
	Drilling	0		
	Reservoir management	10		
	Other	73		
267				
Hypothesis 5: span of control	1	39		139
	2-3	100		128
	4-10	94		
	11-20	20		
	>20	14		
267				
Hypothesis 6: industry experience	0-5	4		65
	6-10	25		
	11-15	36		
	16-20	34		202
	21-25	68		
	>25	100		
267				
Hypothesis 6: company experience	0-5	24		115
	6-10	91		152
	11-15	54		
	16-20	28		
	21-25	24		
	>25	46		
267				

Hypothesis 6: international work experience	0-5	105		105
	6-10	64		162
	11-15	50		
	16-20	26		
	21-25	14		
	>25	8		

267

Hypothesis 6: line manager experience	0-5	76		135
	6-10	59		132
	11-15	76		
	16-20	38		
	21-25	14		
	>25	4		

267

Hypothesis 7: age	21-30	2		48
	31-40	46		
	41-50	116		219
	> 50	101		
	Other	2		

267

Hypothesis 8: geography	United States, Canada	157		157
	Africa	14		110
	Asia	8		
	Australia	6		
	Eurasia	0		
	Europe	42		
	Middle East	2		
	South America	28		
	Mexico, Central America	6		
	Other	4		

267

Table 5.2: Number of line manager questionnaire responses by group

The results from the data regarding specific research hypotheses are presented in sections 5.5.1 to 5.5.8, below.

Across all of the focus groups, participants agreed that organisation factors, especially culture may override certain individual, demographic or contextual

factors. “Individuals centre around the culture”. “People adapt to an organisation culture - they dial in to a work norm”. It was also agreed that this particular organisation is “very careful to hire the “right” type of people, who will fit in”. “We hire people with like minds who will fit our culture”. “If you recruit people who are like you then you will perpetuate the culture”. Additionally, this particular organisation “does a good job of on-boarding new hires and applying a diversity culture”. “When the company was doing a lot of external hiring one of the concerns was that the organisational culture would change. This led to an increased emphasis on on-boarding and other programs to help ensure culture was maintained. Even in redundancy decisions “fit with culture” is probably a part of the selection criteria”.

Individual, demographic or contextual similarities could have an impact: “Take a lot of people with the same background - geography, education, age - and you will get this result.” “Are we all alike because of our common experience (in this organisation)? Are we a very similar group of people?” Also, “a large part of our staff is engineers”. Additionally, despite “different individual, demographic or contextual influences, line managers might agree that development is important and why it is important – but they might differ on how to support the development”. Some focus group participants raised the issue of whether the results shown in individual, demographic or contextual segments would be driven not just by organisation factors but also by reason of this particular organisation having “very specific processes for this activity, which are followed by everyone regardless of demographic group”.

In addition to organisation factors affecting individual, demographic or contextual norms, focus group participants discussed the whether the organisational culture changes over time to reflect individual, demographic or contextual influences? “The organisation’s culture is the reference point, but depending on the make-up of the organisation the culture will flex”. Moreover, different demographic groups may agree that Employee Development is important, but they might differ on how to support the development.

5.5.1 Hypothesis 1: Job role (membership of a different stakeholder group)

Question 2 of the questionnaire asked respondents to state which stakeholder group they belonged to. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.3:

Role	Number of Responses	%
Line manager (someone directly responsible for supporting subordinate employees' development)	267	57%
Senior Manager (such as Project Manager, PRC Director or PDR)	34	7%
HRD practitioner	39	8%
Employee (someone not directly responsible for supporting subordinate employees' development)	128	27%
Total	468	100%

Table 5.3: Distribution of survey responses by role

The perceptions of 267 line managers were compared against the perceptions of 34 senior managers and 39 HRD practitioners regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.1.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: role

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Job role (membership of a different stakeholder group) does not have an influence on stakeholder perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Job role (membership of a different stakeholder group) has an influence on stakeholder perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.4 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for one of the organisation factors and four of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that job role (membership of a different stakeholder group) may have an influence on stakeholder perceptions of factors that can affect line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	8903.50	-1.134	.257	Retain	
Leadership direction	8790.50	-1.294	.196	Retain	
Value articulation	8374.00	-1.874	.061	Retain	
Goal orientation	9725.00	-.028	.978	Retain	
Organisational support	9470.50	-.371	.711	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8030.00	-2.322	.020		Reject
How work is organised	9243.00	-.677	.498	Retain	
Accountability	5833.50	-5.318	.000		Reject
Performance incentives	7884.00	-2.519	.012		Reject
Return on investment	8442.50	-1.774	.076	Retain	
Social exchange	7615.50	-2.960	.003		Reject
Need for purpose	8220.50	-2.058	.040		Reject
Need for autonomy	9552.00	-.265	.791	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8832.00	-1.238	.216	Retain	
Need for competence	9459.00	-.391	.696	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	9306.50	-.594	.553	Retain	

Table 5.4: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (line managers and other roles) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.1.2 Focus group reactions: role

These results “are interesting from the perspective that senior management and HRD are designing/deciding on these initiatives that seem a bit out of touch with what the people on the front line are thinking (but they are the ones who need to implement it)”.

Focus group participants believed that “HRD practitioners are influenced by the fact that they live these issues every day” and also because “HRD sees it all to be important because they believe in it – maybe line managers and senior managers haven’t bought into it so strongly”. “For HRD practitioners this is their world, for line managers this is part of what they do”. Similarly, “this is what we do all day, for other roles it is only part of the job”. Others believed that “HRD

practitioners are more idealistic – this is what we want to happen. Line managers are more realistic”. Additionally, “this doesn’t impact senior management every day, but line managers are living it every day. HRD doesn’t see it on the front line either”.

5.5.2 Hypothesis 2: Line managers' gender

Question 14 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to state which gender group they belonged to. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.5:

Gender	Number of Responses	%
<i>Female</i>	<i>86</i>	<i>32%</i>
<i>Male</i>	<i>181</i>	<i>68%</i>
Total	267	100%

Table 5.5: Distribution of survey responses by gender

The perceptions of 181 male line managers were compared against the perceptions of 86 female line managers regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

The study population appears representative of the overall gender composition within the Oil and Gas Industry – analysis of the American Petroleum Institute sponsored report into Minority and Female Employment in the Oil & Gas and Petrochemical Industries (IHS Global, 2014) indicates that female representation in management, business and financial positions is approximately 27%.

5.5.2.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: gender

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' gender does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' gender has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.6 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for one of the motivation factors, need for autonomy, and therefore suggested that line manager gender may only have a slight influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	7617.00	-.282	.778	Retain	
Leadership direction	7505.00	-.476	.634	Retain	
Value articulation	7690.50	-.159	.873	Retain	
Goal orientation	7687.50	-.163	.870	Retain	
Organisational support	7274.50	-.866	.387	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	7640.00	-.244	.807	Retain	
How work is organised	7347.00	-.742	.458	Retain	
Accountability	7278.00	-.866	.386	Retain	
Performance incentives	7306.00	-.815	.415	Retain	
Return on investment	7469.50	-.539	.590	Retain	
Social exchange	6996.00	-1.379	.168	Retain	
Need for purpose	7647.00	-.232	.817	Retain	
Need for autonomy	6561.50	-2.111	.035		Reject
Need for relatedness	7351.00	-.739	.460	Retain	
Need for competence	7010.00	-1.331	.183	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	7278.00	-.866	.386	Retain	

Table 5.6: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (male line managers and female line managers) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.2.2 Focus group reactions: gender

Most focus group participants agreed that the organisation's employees are so influenced by the culture and norms that it doesn't make any difference whether you are male or female - "when you come to work you become "an employee", neither male nor female". "This organisation also has very strong foundation values, which are driving these attitudes". "In this culture there is no difference as to how males and females approach this issue".

Some focus group participants asked "does the female culture need to behave like the male culture in order to be successful?" "It seems like you need to assimilate to the prevailing culture. Whoever is dominant, the others need to adapt."

Other focus group participants discussed this result in relation to whether, regardless of the culture, there is no difference between males and females when it comes to developing people. “It’s seen as part of the role (to support development) – are there really any optional considerations that male or females would regard differently?” “It becomes compliance and behaviours homogenise around the expectations set out for the task.”

These results align with previous research that although people expect male and female line managers to draw from very different leadership behaviours, the evidence that men and women actually engage in different leadership styles is at best weak.

Eagly and Johnson (1990) and Van Engen et al (2001) suggested that several factors in the organisational context moderate the impact of the gender-typing of the immediate work context. Organisational characteristics such as organisational structure, culture and demography, and the corporate mission and vision propagated leaders all shape behaviour in organisations.

Van Engen et al (2001) also suggested the male or female domination of an organisational context influences the styles of both male and female line managers and that both male and female managers adopt styles congruent with the gender-typing of the context in which they are working. There was also some disagreement amongst focus group participants about whether these results indicated that an organisation could change its culture relatively fast because it seems that people adapt quickly. Others contended that an organisation can assimilate people on an incremental basis, but this might not apply to a sudden change for the whole organisation.

5.5.3 Hypothesis 3: Line managers' organisation type (project versus routine)

Question 1 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of the type of organisational experience on which they would be basing their responses. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.7:

Organisation type	Number of Responses	%
Experience in a project-based organisation with temporary structures (such as PRC)	147	55%
Experience in a routine organisation with a stable structure (such as a BU or HQ)	96	36%
Other	24	9%
Total	267	100%

Table 5.7: Distribution of survey responses by organisation type

The perceptions of 147 project-based line managers were compared against the perceptions of 96 routine organisation-based line managers regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.3.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: organisation type

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' organisation type (project versus routine) does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' organisation type (project versus routine) has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.8 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for two of the organisation factors and two of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' organisation type may have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	6171.50	-1.66	.098	Retain	
Leadership direction	5889.50	-2.20	.028		Reject
Value articulation	6343.50	-1.35	.177	Retain	
Goal orientation	5615.00	-2.71	.007		Reject
Organisational support	6382.50	-1.26	.207	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	6263.50	-1.49	.136	Retain	
How work is organised	6614.50	-0.83	.408	Retain	
Accountability	6303.00	-1.42	.155	Retain	
Performance incentives	6248.00	-1.52	.128	Retain	
Return on investment	7019.00	-0.07	.944	Retain	
Social exchange	6756.50	-0.58	.564	Retain	
Need for purpose	6144.00	-1.71	.087	Retain	
Need for autonomy	6190.00	-1.65	.099	Retain	
Need for relatedness	6592.50	-0.87	.383	Retain	
Need for competence	5562.50	-2.83	.005		Reject
Intrinsic motivation	5754.50	-2.45	.014		Reject

Table 5.8: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (project-based line managers and routine organisation-based line managers) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.3.2 Focus group reactions: organisation type

In considering the impact of organisation factors, focus group participants discussed how important it is to have a culture on a project that aligns as far as possible to that of the main organisation company culture and how it is possible for a project culture to emulate the main organisation.

“If you are in an already existing organisation then organisational factors including culture are already established”. “You need to remember that the main organisation continues on and on, but the project starts and ends in a relatively short time span”. “If you are in a start-up organisation (such as a project) it will be the Project Manager and the first group of people on the project team will be

the ones who set the tone and set the culture. It also depends on the mix of the project team (company versus contractors, etc.)". "As the project grows rapidly, and new members join with others leaving, this may act as a disruptor to the culture". All these factors lead the influence of organisation factors to be similar, but not identical to the main organisation and enables the project to be able to deliver as directed by that main organisation. "The project lives within the organisation culture".

Some focus group participants thought the return on investment scores (motivation factor) might have been lower from questionnaire respondents in the project world "because we tend to hop around every couple of years and therefore line managers don't see that they will achieve the return on investment". Whereas "if you are parked in a job for a long time (routine organisation) then you will get to see that return of investment. You will do it to make your life simpler and get the job done better". Other focus group participants thought the revolving door nature of projects may have had some effect - "what goes around comes around and people end up working together again on future projects".

Some focus group participants questioned whether organisation factors in project-based organisations were conducive to line managers supporting Employee Development activities. "A project environment can easily create a culture where what is valued is commitment to the project and not necessarily the development of employees (even though further developing skills would serve the project well)". "Project leaders often have an attitude that we have staffed the organisation with highly skilled people and that we need only focus on delivering the project – where the perceived value lies. They often feel they don't need to identify training or development - any training needed could be done between projects."

Additionally, because of the particular environment of projects, focus group participants also considered whether line managers alone could properly support the development of employees. "The use of technical peers to provide support to the line manager is a best practice." "Subject Matter Experts can ascertain development needs, which the line managers and employees can action via on-the-job activities."

5.5.4 Hypothesis 4: Line managers' functional discipline

Question 15 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of their functional discipline. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.9:

Functional discipline	Number of Responses	%
Facilities engineering	128	48%
Supply Chain Management (SCM)	32	12%
Health, Environment, Safety (HES)	24	9%
Drilling	0	0%
Reservoir management	10	4%
Other	73	27%
Total	267	100%

Table 5.9: Distribution of survey responses by functional discipline

The perceptions of 128 facilities engineering line managers were compared against the perceptions of 139 line managers from other functions regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.4.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: function

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' functional discipline does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' functional discipline has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.10 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for one of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' functional discipline may have only a slight influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	7878.00	-1.620	.105	Retain	
Leadership direction	8447.50	-.718	.473	Retain	
Value articulation	8816.50	-.128	.898	Retain	
Goal orientation	7903.00	-1.587	.113	Retain	
Organisational support	8876.50	-.031	.975	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8820.00	-.121	.903	Retain	
How work is organised	8399.50	-.790	.429	Retain	
Accountability	7893.00	-1.609	.108	Retain	
Performance incentives	8802.50	-.149	.881	Retain	
Return on investment	8832.50	-.102	.919	Retain	
Social exchange	8138.00	-1.243	.214	Retain	
Need for purpose	8091.50	-1.282	.200	Retain	
Need for autonomy	8256.50	-1.034	.301	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8341.00	-.888	.374	Retain	
Need for competence	7239.50	-2.667	.008		Reject
Intrinsic motivation	7720.00	-1.879	.060	Retain	

Table 5.10: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (facilities engineering line managers and line managers from other functions) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.4.2 Focus group reactions: function

Focus group participants believed that “a line manager who is going to develop their people is going to develop them no matter the function they are in.”

5.5.5 Hypothesis 5: Line managers' span of control

Question 18 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of their current span of control. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.11:

Span of control	1	2-3	4-10	11-20	>20	Total
Number of employees whose development you are responsible for supporting	39	100	94	20	14	267
	15%	37%	35%	7%	5%	100%

Table 5.11: Distribution of survey responses by span of control

The perceptions of 139 line managers supporting 1-3 employees were compared against the perceptions of 128 line managers supporting 4 or more employees regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.5.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: span of control

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' span of control does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' span of control has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.12 below, were not significant ($p < .05$) for any of the factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' span of control may not have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	8770.00	-.200	.841	Retain	
Leadership direction	7881.50	-1.635	.102	Retain	
Value articulation	8785.00	-.178	.859	Retain	
Goal orientation	8752.50	-.229	.819	Retain	
Organisational support	8190.50	-1.124	.261	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8149.00	-1.194	.232	Retain	
How work is organised	8328.00	-.904	.366	Retain	
Accountability	8178.00	-1.152	.249	Retain	
Performance incentives	8081.50	-1.302	.193	Retain	
Return on investment	7874.00	-1.643	.100	Retain	
Social exchange	8268.00	-1.030	.303	Retain	
Need for purpose	7851.50	-1.664	.096	Retain	
Need for autonomy	8872.00	-.039	.969	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8495.00	-.642	.521	Retain	
Need for competence	8526.00	-.596	.551	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	8767.50	-.205	.837	Retain	

Table 5.12: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (line managers supporting 1-3 employees and line managers supporting 4 or more employees) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.5.2 Focus group reactions: span of control

Focus group participants considered that the results correlated with the size of groups – line managers with longer spans of control perceived increased importance around opportunity factors.

5.5.6 Hypothesis 6: Line managers' type/length of experience

Question 16 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of their years of experience. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.13:

Type of experience	0-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	16-20 Years	21-25 Years	>25 Years	Total
In Industry	4	25	36	34	68	100	267
	1%	9%	13%	13%	25%	37%	100%
In Company	24	91	54	28	24	46	267
	9%	34%	20%	10%	9%	17%	100%
International	105	64	50	26	14	8	267
	39%	24%	19%	10%	5%	3%	100%
As a line manager directly responsible for supporting subordinate employees' development	76	59	76	38	14	4	267
	28%	22%	28%	14%	5%	1%	100%

Table 5.13: Distribution of survey responses by types of experience

* * * *

The perceptions of 65 line managers with 0-15 years of Oil and Gas industry experience were compared to 202 line managers with over 15 of Oil and Gas industry experience regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.6.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: Oil and Gas industry experience

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' Oil and Gas industry experience does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' Oil and Gas industry experience has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.14 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for four of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' Oil and Gas industry experience may have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	6480.00	-0.157	0.875	Retain	
Leadership direction	5583.50	-1.842	0.066	Retain	
Value articulation	6534.00	-0.058	0.954	Retain	
Goal orientation	6215.00	-0.651	0.515	Retain	
Organisational support	6486.00	-0.146	0.884	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	6457.00	-0.201	0.841	Retain	
How work is organised	6396.50	-0.312	0.755	Retain	
Accountability	5682.00	-1.649	0.099	Retain	
Performance incentives	5382.00	-2.201	0.028		Reject
Return on investment	6085.00	-0.898	0.369	Retain	
Social exchange	5048.00	-2.895	0.004		Reject
Need for purpose	5947.00	-1.146	0.252	Retain	
Need for autonomy	6259.00	-0.576	0.565	Retain	
Need for relatedness	6169.50	-0.737	0.461	Retain	
Need for competence	5240.50	-2.482	0.013		Reject
Intrinsic motivation	5308.50	-2.337	0.019		Reject

Table 5.14: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of Oil and Gas industry experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

The perceptions of 115 line managers with 0-10 years of Company experience were compared to 152 line managers with over 10 years of Company experience regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.6.2 Mann-Whitney U tests: Company experience

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' Company experience does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' Company experience has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development'

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	8564.00	-.283	.778	Retain	
Leadership direction	8599.50	-.227	.821	Retain	
Value articulation	8252.00	-.794	.427	Retain	
Goal orientation	8360.50	-.612	.541	Retain	
Organisational support	7929.50	-1.302	.193	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8578.00	-.261	.794	Retain	
How work is organised	8176.00	-.905	.365	Retain	
Accountability	7360.50	-2.233	.026		Reject
Performance incentives	6829.00	-3.082	.002		Reject
Return on investment	8143.00	-.968	.333	Retain	
Social exchange	6282.00	-4.066	.000		Reject
Need for purpose	8028.00	-1.145	.252	Retain	
Need for autonomy	8509.50	-.376	.707	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8332.00	-.659	.510	Retain	
Need for competence	7065.00	-2.721	.007		Reject
Intrinsic motivation	7964.00	-1.251	.211	Retain	

Table 5.15: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of Company experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.15 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for four of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' Company experience may have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

* * * *

The perceptions of 105 line managers with 0-5 years of international work experience were compared to 162 line managers with over 5 years of international work experience regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.6.3 Mann-Whitney U tests: international work experience

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' international work experience does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' international work experience has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.16 below, were not significant ($p < .05$) for any of the factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' international work experience may not have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	7614.50	-1.449	.147	Retain	
Leadership direction	8398.00	-.175	.861	Retain	
Value articulation	7817.00	-1.134	.257	Retain	
Goal orientation	8097.00	-.667	.505	Retain	
Organisational support	7961.00	-.886	.376	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	7959.50	-.892	.373	Retain	
How work is organised	8176.00	-.535	.592	Retain	
Accountability	7429.50	-1.765	.078	Retain	
Performance incentives	7746.50	-1.240	.215	Retain	
Return on investment	7818.50	-1.129	.259	Retain	
Social exchange	7839.00	-1.117	.264	Retain	
Need for purpose	8421.00	-.137	.891	Retain	
Need for autonomy	7920.00	-.967	.333	Retain	
Need for relatedness	7971.00	-.874	.382	Retain	
Need for competence	7824.50	-1.121	.262	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	7692.00	-1.328	.184	Retain	

Table 5.16: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of international experience) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

* * * *

The perceptions of 135 line managers with 0-10 years of line manager experience were compared to 132 line managers with over 10 years of line manager experience regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.6.4 Mann-Whitney U tests: line manager experience

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' experience as a line manager does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' experience as a line manager has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.17 below, were not significant ($p < .05$) for any of the factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' experience as a line manager may not have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	8537.00	-.593	.553	Retain	
Leadership direction	8757.00	-.245	.807	Retain	
Value articulation	7724.00	-1.910	.056	Retain	
Goal orientation	8620.50	-.462	.644	Retain	
Organisational support	8556.50	-.563	.574	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8495.50	-.662	.508	Retain	
How work is organised	8194.00	-1.139	.255	Retain	
Accountability	8615.50	-.472	.637	Retain	
Performance incentives	7920.50	-1.580	.114	Retain	
Return on investment	8894.00	-.026	.979	Retain	
Social exchange	8342.50	-.930	.353	Retain	
Need for purpose	8602.00	-.490	.624	Retain	
Need for autonomy	8675.50	-.379	.705	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8410.50	-.799	.424	Retain	
Need for competence	8036.50	-1.405	.160	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	7882.50	-1.640	.101	Retain	

Table 5.17: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers with different levels of experience as a line manager) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.6.5 Focus group reactions

Focus group participants considered whether “line managers’ beliefs are shaped by the organisation culture or is it that they seek out an organisation because the organisation’s culture aligns with their own beliefs. Is an individual changed by it or reinforced by it?” Or perhaps “the company hiring clones of what already exists - we seek out people who will fit it into our culture. Also we on-board and assimilate them.”

5.5.7 Hypothesis 7: Line managers' age

Question 13 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of their age. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.18:

Age	Number of Responses	%
21-30	2	1%
31-40	46	17%
41-50	116	43%
>50	101	38%
Prefer not to answer	2	1%
Total	267	100%

Table 5.18: Distribution of survey responses by age

The perceptions of 48 line managers aged between 21 and 40 were compared to 219 line managers aged over 40 regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.7.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: age

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' age does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' age has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.19 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for five of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' age

may have an influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	4443.00	-1.683	.092	Retain	
Leadership direction	4466.50	-1.643	.100	Retain	
Value articulation	5086.50	-.355	.722	Retain	
Goal orientation	4880.50	-.781	.435	Retain	
Organisational support	5090.00	-.344	.731	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	4996.00	-.541	.589	Retain	
How work is organised	4913.50	-.709	.478	Retain	
Accountability	3796.00	-3.048	.002		Reject
Performance incentives	4167.50	-2.264	.024		Reject
Return on investment	4718.50	-1.124	.261	Retain	
Social exchange	3317.50	-4.135	.000		Reject
Need for purpose	4330.50	-1.919	.055	Retain	
Need for autonomy	4648.50	-1.278	.201	Retain	
Need for relatedness	4409.50	-1.763	.078	Retain	
Need for competence	3435.00	-3.814	.000		Reject
Intrinsic motivation	3942.50	-2.730	.006		Reject

Table 5.19: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers aged between 21 and 40 and line managers aged over 40) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.7.2 Focus group reactions: age

Focus group participants noted that there was a trend for younger line managers to score higher than older line managers, but no particular items stood out. Some focus group participants wondered if the younger line managers score highly in general because they are more enthusiastic compared to older line managers who are likely more sanguine about these issues. Other focus group participants pondered whether the younger line managers take everything more seriously because they are new to the role, whereas for older line managers it has become “just one more thing that we do”.

Referencing the need for autonomy – “early on you follow the manual. After a time you start creating your own way of doing/thinking. Is the organisation setting a minimum standard that line managers take to a new level as their experience increases?”

On accountability “younger line managers want to prove themselves so they may be more motivated by those tasks that will highlight their performance capability”. “Younger line managers are still motivated by money and promotions”. “Younger line managers want to prove themselves and want to be made accountable. Older ones have already proved themselves”.

“Age and salary can be equated – therefore perhaps performance incentives have a bigger impact for younger people”.

Need for competence scored high for younger line managers. “Older line managers probably feel they are already competent, therefore not motivated by need for competence”. Alternatively, “have we been (recently) accelerating younger people into more senior roles and they don’t feel they really have all the skills that they need (as line managers)?” “Maybe younger line managers have a strong desire for competence – because they are still learning”.

Social exchange has the biggest variance “because when you get older no one is helping you out – you’ve peaked, you’re done. I’ve reached a certain point so it no longer matters whether my own development is supported”. Alternatively, “older guys say “I had to find my own way so why should I help anyone else?”.

Relating to need for purpose – “older people also want to leave a legacy, also have skin in the game (stockholder)”, and have also “invested large part of their career towards the success of the organisation”.

5.5.8 Hypothesis 8: Line managers' geographic origin

Question 17 of the questionnaire asked line manager respondents to give details of their geographic point of origin. The distribution of responses is shown below in Table 5.20:

Geography	Where you were mainly raised	
	Number of Responses	%
Africa	14	5%
Asia	8	3%
Australia	6	2%
Eurasia	0	0%
Europe	42	16%
Middle East	2	1%
United States, Canada	157	59%
South America	28	10%
Mexico, Central America	6	2%
Various international locations	4	1%
Total	267	100%

Table 5.20: Distribution of survey responses by geographic origin

The perceptions of 157 line managers from United States, Canada were compared to 110 line managers from differing geographies regarding the influence of organisation, ability, opportunity, and motivation factors in relation to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. See Appendix B for detailed data.

5.5.8.1 Mann-Whitney U tests: geography

Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis:

H₀: Line managers' geographic origin does not have an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

H₁: Line managers' geographic origin has an influence on their perceptions of the organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

The results of the tests, shown in Table 5.21 below, were significant ($p < .05$) for one of the motivation factors, and therefore suggested that line managers' geographic origin may have only a slight influence on line managers' perceptions of factors that can affect their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

	Mann-Whitney U	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Decision	
Organisational culture	8309.50	-.526	.599	Retain	
Leadership direction	7914.50	-1.170	.242	Retain	
Value articulation	8138.50	-.812	.417	Retain	
Goal orientation	7334.50	-2.109	.035		Reject
Organisational support	7575.00	-1.714	.087	Retain	
Role dissonance and ambiguity	8370.50	-.429	.668	Retain	
How work is organised	8625.50	-.015	.988	Retain	
Accountability	8380.50	-.415	.679	Retain	
Performance incentives	8279.50	-.577	.564	Retain	
Return on investment	7853.00	-1.276	.202	Retain	
Social exchange	8475.00	-.266	.790	Retain	
Need for purpose	7910.00	-1.173	.241	Retain	
Need for autonomy	8537.00	-.161	.872	Retain	
Need for relatedness	8379.50	-.415	.678	Retain	
Need for competence	8232.00	-.659	.510	Retain	
Intrinsic motivation	8507.50	-.207	.836	Retain	

Table 5.21: Results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (between line managers from USA, Canada and line managers from other regions) for organisation, opportunity and motivation factors

5.5.8.2 Focus group reactions: geography

Nevertheless, focus group participant considered the effect of the organisation on the line managers' geographic origins and vice versa. "The organisation culture permeates somewhat into different countries" and "there are certain normative behaviours that are pretty much the same in different locations". However, "probably different nationalities mean that there are some differences in the organisational cultures in different countries" "each region has a separate culture which is a sub-set of an overall organisational culture"

Across all of the focus groups, participants agreed that it would be worthwhile collecting more data to further explore this research hypothesis.

5.6 Results summary

The results detailed in the preceding sections of this chapter are summarized as follows:

Study Objective 1: to understand what are the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors that most influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development

Overall, organisation factors were perceived by line managers as being slightly more important than both opportunity factors and motivation factors, although the results showed only a marginal difference between the perceived importance of the factors. On a Likert scale of 1 to 5, the mean scores for questionnaire responses were: organisation factor, 3.55; opportunity factor, 3.15; motivation factor 3.16. This indicated that each factor was perceived to be between moderately important and very important.

Study Objective 2: to identify which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives:

A more detailed view of questionnaire data for the 16 individual variables comprising organisation, opportunity and motivation factors disclosed that, excluding the performance incentives variable, none of the individual variables stood out from the rest. On a Likert scale of 1 to 5, the mean scores for questionnaire responses were between 2.93 and 3.66 for 15 of the 16 items. Additionally, One-Sample Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were conducted on the sixteen individual items comprising organisation, opportunity and motivation factors to evaluate the null hypothesis that the median of each organisation, opportunity and motivation variable is equal to the median of the overall sample (calculated as 3.184). It was found that the medians for organisational culture, leadership direction, value articulation, goal orientation, performance incentives, return on investment, social exchange, need for purpose, need for relatedness and need for competence were statistically significantly different from the calculated overall median.

Although these results showed statistically significant differences, it does not necessarily mean that the differences encountered were enough to be practically significant. From the perspective of most focus group participants this result could have occurred for two main reasons. Firstly, a lot of the factors are not independent – there are linkages/crossovers between them, they blend together, “there is not a lot of daylight between them”. Secondly, questionnaire respondents could have regarded these factors as all being part of the overall toolbox to achieve line manager engagement. “It’s not one or other of these tools, but all of them are required to some degree”, with no one element having significantly more or less importance than another.

In addition, the focus group discussions emphasised that organisation factors moderate the impact of the other factors. The comments indicated that given different organisation conditions, the relative importance of certain opportunity, motivation and ability factors might be perceived differently.

Study Objective 3: to ascertain the extent to which the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors that most influence line managers’ engagement in support of subordinate employees’ development are moderated by individual or demographic factors:

Using questionnaire data, eight different hypotheses were tested – to determine whether role, gender, organisation type, job function, span of control, experience (4 variants), age, or geography origin impacted line managers’ perceptions about the influence of various organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors.

The Mann-Whitney U test results, summarised in Table 5.22 below, revealed that five of the individual/demographic variables - role, organisation type, industry experience, Company experience, and age – did have an impact on line managers’ perceptions about the influence of motivation factors. Three of the individual/demographic variables – span of control, international experience, and experience as a line manager – had no impact on line managers’ perceptions about the influence of any of the organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors. It was also found that individual/demographic variables generally did not have a significant impact on line managers’ perceptions about the influence of organisation and opportunity factors.

	Role	Gender	Organisation type	Function	Span of control	Industry experience	Company experience	International experience	Line manager experience	Age	Geography
ORGANISATION FACTORS	Organisational culture										
	Leadership direction		R								
	Value articulation										
	Goal orientation		R								R
OPPORTUNITY FACTORS	Organisational support										
	Role dissonance and ambiguity										
	How work is organised										
MOTIVATION FACTORS	Accountability	R						R		R	
	Performance incentives	R				R	R	R		R	
	Return on investment										
	Social exchange	R				R	R	R		R	
	Need for purpose	R									
	Need for autonomy										
	Need for relatedness										
	Need for competence		R	R		R	R			R	
	Intrinsic motivation		R			R				R	

Table 5.22: Summary of results of Mann-Whitney U tests to compare the differences between the medians of two groups (R = reject the null hypothesis that individual/contextual factors do not have an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development)

CHAPTER 6:

**Conclusions, resources and interventions,
limitations and suggestions for further research**

6.1 Outline

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview and discussion of this particular study. There are two related objectives: (a) discuss implications of the results; (b) set out possible interventions that address the findings from this study; (c) discuss limitations of this particular study and make recommendations for future research.

6.2 Conclusions and discussion

A number of studies (e.g. Sambrook (2005), Sikora & Ferris (2011), Bos-Nehles et al (2013)) have concentrated on the issues that impact line managers' fulfilment of the HR responsibilities devolved to them. The majority of these studies looked at whether such factors as organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity could predict line managers' HR practice implementation levels.

This particular study embraced a slightly different focus and started from the premise that previously reported inconsistencies in line managers' performance in supporting subordinate employees' development were due to their level of engagement in the task. For that reason, an operating framework based on the Job Demands-Resources model was adopted to help understand what are the organisational, ability, motivation and opportunity factors most influencing line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development, to ascertain the extent to which demographic and contextual factors also exert an influence on line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development and to investigate which of these factors is likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours, and which may produce the most significant change in line managers' behaviours if targeted by organisational initiatives.

Through a mixed methodology case study approach, combining a questionnaire instrument and focus group discussions with line managers and other stakeholders within the Oil and Gas industry, this particular study identified several findings that have implications on different levels.

It was found that, at an overall level, organisation factors have the strongest influence – possibly because line managers are primarily driven by what the organisation tells them is important. However, the current results showed only a marginal difference between the perceived importance of organisation, opportunity and motivation factors. This finding supports Lopez-Cotarelo (2011), who also noted that although the prevailing view has been that line managers act primarily on behalf of the organisation, applying HR policy in ways by-and-large consistent with organisational procedure, nevertheless line managers carry out HR activities as organisational actors who pursue a combination of organisational and individual goals. Therefore, at an overall level, companies need to have a focus not just on organisation factors, but must also pay attention to the conditions that

have an effect on the other factors.

The focus group discussions also brought to light some of the dependencies between the various factors. For example, even with organisation factors in place it is unlikely that optimal line manager engagement will be achieved without the line manager also having the appropriate capacity (opportunity factor), skills (ability factor), and proclivity (motivation factor). Similarly, even with the appropriate skills, line managers' engagement will be impacted if any of organisation, opportunity or motivation factors are lacking. And so on.

Moreover, the results emphasised that organisation factors, in particular, moderate the impact of the other factors. For example: Firstly, in relation to opportunity factors, it was discussed how line managers take into consideration organisation factors such as goal orientation when considering how to allocate their own resources in the face of high workload and competing demands; Secondly, in respect of motivation factors, focus group participants mentioned how leadership direction can impact whether accountability is a stimulus towards engagement; Finally, concerning ability factors, the data indicated that skills from the challenging dimension such as "confronting issues/saying how it is" and "giving feedback" were perceived as lower importance than skills from the assessing dimension such as "drawing out insights" and "planning, previewing and anticipating". Focus group participants reflected that these results were indicative of the prevailing organisation culture.

Additionally, it was found that organisation factors moderate the influence of certain individual/contextual factors. Even though the analysis of quantitative data indicated that for variables such as organisation type, experience, age and geography there were some differences in the scores reported by differing demographics - focus group participants perceived that organisation factors had a homogenising impact on certain individual/contextual factors and thus limited their influence. However, at the same time, the focus group discourse acknowledged that an organisation is shaped by the diversity of its constituent members and it was highlighted that certain individual/contextual factors also moderate line managers' perceptions of the organisation factors that influence their engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. For example, focus group participants cited how important it is to have a culture on a project

that aligns as far as possible to that of the main organisation's culture - but that there are many challenges in achieving that condition given the temporary nature of the project as well as the constant churn and mix of personnel. Additionally, it was noted that although "the organisation culture permeates somewhat into different countries" and "there are certain normative behaviours that are pretty much the same in different locations", nonetheless because of different national characteristics, there are "probably some differences in the organisational cultures in different countries" and "each region has a separate culture which is a sub-set of an overall organisational culture".

Therefore, taken together, these results indicated that: organisation factors were perceived by line managers as being more important than both opportunity factors and motivation factors; organisation factors moderate the impact of the ability, opportunity and motivation factors; and organisation factors can also moderate individual/contextual factors. Additionally, individual/contextual factors can moderate the influence of organisation, opportunity and, particularly, motivation factors.

Based upon these outcomes it is possible to revise the framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development. The operating framework in Figure 2.4 assumed that individual/contextual factors moderated organisation, ability, opportunity and motivation factors. That framework has duly been amended to reflect the results from this current study, which show that organisation factors can also moderate individual/contextual factors, as shown in Figure 6.1 below. It is hoped that this revised framework can help organisations to better manage the factors that influence line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development.

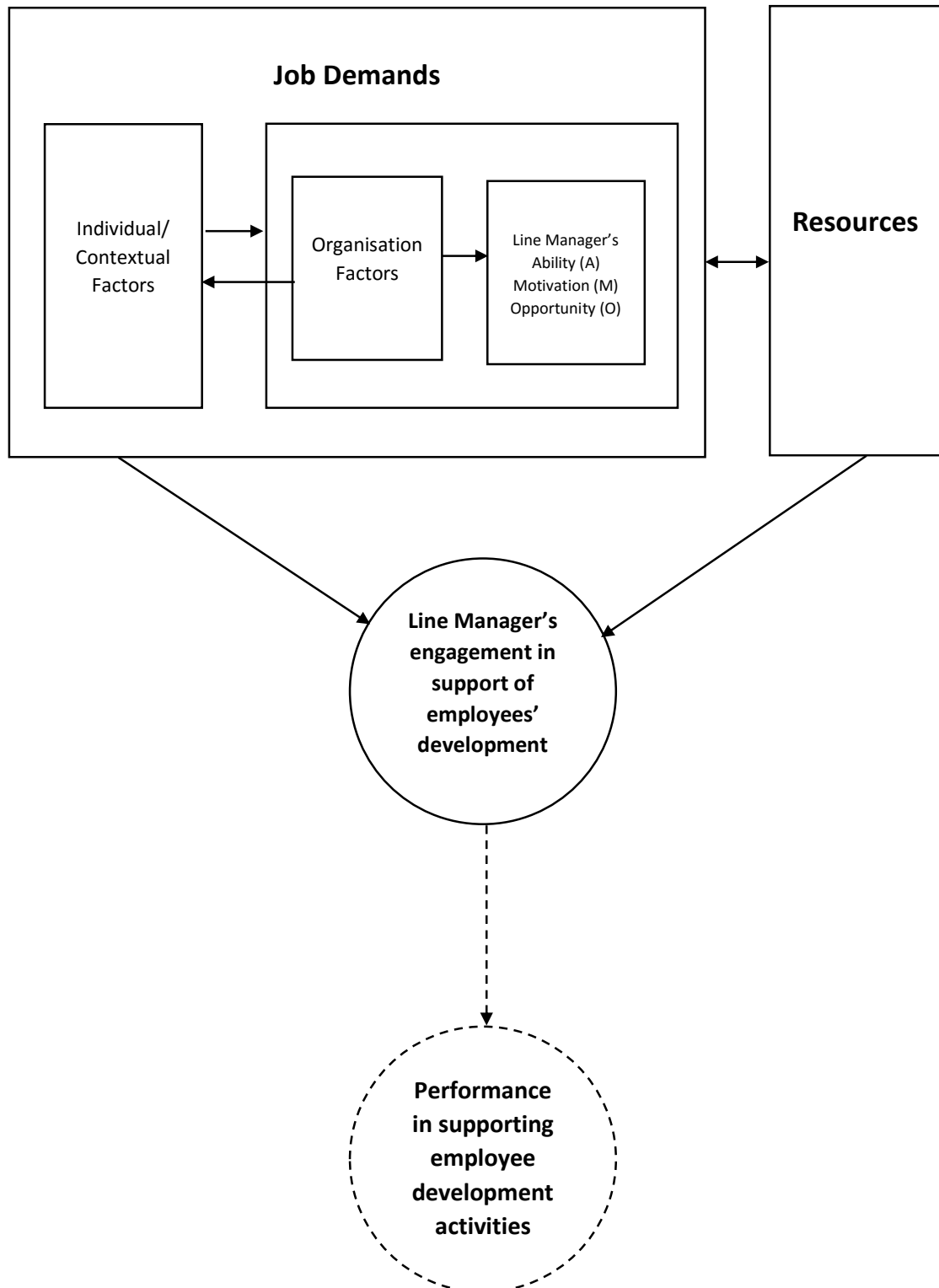


Figure 6.1: A revised framework of factors influencing line managers' engagement in supporting subordinate employees' development.

This particular study also suggested that, at the detailed level, there is no “silver bullet”. The questionnaire data pointed to there being only minor differences between the sixteen individual variables that made up the organisational, opportunity and motivation factors. This finding was also confirmed in the qualitative data; focus group participants commented that none of the individual items stood out from the rest. Some of the focus group participants remarked that this perhaps indicated there is not really a single lever that the organisation can pull to have significant impact on line manager engagement. From the perspective of most focus group participants this result could have occurred for two main reasons. Firstly, many of the variables are not independent – there are linkages/crossovers between them, they blend together, “there is not a lot of daylight between them”. This might have led to this similar ranking. Secondly, questionnaire respondents could have regarded these factors as all being part of the overall toolbox to achieve line manager engagement. “It’s not one or other of these tools, but all of them are required to some degree”, with no one element have significantly more or less importance than another. Companies must therefore pay attention to all items – different individuals perceive different factors to be important.

The scoring by questionnaire respondents indicated that motivation driven by autonomous regulation was more important than motivation driven by controlled regulation. Focus group participants proposed that, to some extent, this result was explained by respondents who had answered within the paradigm of prevailing organisational factors of the subject organisation, in which line managers are not normally measured or assessed on their participation in activities that support employees’ development. Focus group participants discussed this issue more than any other, with most comments advocating that, if put in place, accountability and/or performance incentives would be effective motivating drivers for line manager engagement. One explanation for this was that members of an engineering or technical-based organisation would not be averse to being assessed and measured against benchmarks and standards.

Focus group participants noted that clear and effective HRD policies and practices were useful. However, regarding ability factors, they indicated that training for line managers was more important and impressed that any training in “how to do it” should be most directed towards building the necessary soft skills for line

managers. The questionnaire data indicated that, in the subject organisation of this particular study, soft skills from the assessing dimension were held to be more important than from the supporting or challenging dimension. However, as mentioned above, these results may vary given different organisational cultures or different line managers' individual needs. Focus group participants supposed that, in the absence of this necessary training, line managers would lean on previous experiences (both good and bad) as employees on the receiving end of support from their own supervisors.

In relation to opportunity factors, focus group participants were concerned that supporting employees' development will never be seen as a top priority task by line managers, and also emphasised that line managers are faced with competing demands, increasing workload and, in many cases, also have other tasks to perform including technical work. Focus group participants believed that line managers cope by allocating resources to where they get the biggest bang for the buck. This will inevitably mean that some employees' development needs will not be met. Focus group participants stressed that it would be difficult to establish and maintain a development culture without line managers' playing a significant role in the process, but mentioned that line managers needed to be supported by subject matter experts to enable them to give full attention to their core activities while still being able to properly discharge their responsibilities to support employees' development.

It is hoped that this study will not only lead to some understanding of some of the practical difficulties faced by organisations seeking to secure line managers' engagement in support of employees' development, but should also provide a basis for businesses improving their performances in this respect. Together, these findings suggest that organisations may expect to see an increase in line manager's engagement in support of employees' development through interventions that balance reducing demands with available resources.

6.3 Resources and interventions

6.3.1 Implications for academic understanding

This particular study intended to identify which factors are likely to have the biggest impact on line managers' behaviours and provide a basis for businesses improving their performance by properly aligning intervention levers relating to line managers' engagement in support of subordinate employees' development. The results and conclusions, reported in Chapters 5.6 and 6.2 respectively, indicated that at an overall level organisation factors have the strongest influence – possibly because line managers are primarily driven by what the organisation tells them is important. However, there was only a marginal difference between the perceived importance of the organisation factor compared to opportunity and motivation factors. Additionally, the results of this particular study suggested that, at the detailed level, there is no “silver bullet”. The data pointed to there being only minor differences between the sixteen individual variables that made up the organisational, opportunity and motivation factors and perhaps there is not really a single lever that the organisation can pull to have significant impact on line manager engagement. This implies that companies need to have a focus not just on the organisation factor, but must also pay attention to the conditions that have an effect on the other factors. It was also found that certain individual/demographic variables have an impact on line managers' perceptions about the influence of organisation, ability, motivation and opportunity factors.

Having reviewed the factors that influence line managers' engagement in support of employees' development, it is worthwhile to consider what are the resources and practices that could be applied to enhance line managers' engagement in this area. Chapter 2.9 emphasised that there is a strong theoretical case for interventions being able to influence engagement. Rich et al (2010) also found that practices that engender engagement among line managers can enhance their job performance and that it may be worthwhile to focus resources on practices that enhance line manager engagement. Job resources can come from the organisation (e.g., pay, career opportunities, and job security), interpersonal and social relations (line manager and co-worker support, and team climate), the organisation of work (e.g., role clarity, goal clarity and participation in decision making), and from the task itself (e.g., skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and performance feedback).

Zeni et al (2013) were concerned that any intervention explored by an organisation should be carefully explored to determine whether or not there is a business case that supports reallocation of resources - for while the benefits might be clear, there are also potential costs. Siemsen et (2008) suggested that before expending significant resources on interventions organisations should identify the “bottleneck” or specific constraining factor. They argued that managerial interventions aimed at factors that are not constraining in the organisation are less likely to be effective. Also, the nature of investments to be made will vary widely depending on which variable or combination of variables constitutes the bottleneck that needs to be addressed. Regarding which job resources matter most, Mauno et al (2010) argued that the answer depends partly on the job itself and partly on individual preferences; both of which should be scrutinized before implementing work engagement interventions.

This business case should also take into account Tansky & Cohen’s, (2001) contention that organisations that make an effort to develop their line managers may receive a double benefit. When organisations make efforts to develop their line managers, the line managers become more committed to the organisation and also more likely to develop their employees. Assisting line managers with their own development will relate both to their organisational commitment and to their perceptions of organisational support. It will also create a dynamic where they will be more likely to assist their own subordinates in development. Additionally, Paustian-Underdahl et al (2013) provided evidence that supportive line managers not only provide helpful guidance and mentoring to their subordinates, but they are also considered to be better performers and more promotable by senior organisational leaders than are less supportive line managers. As such, when organisations choose to develop the supportiveness of line managers, they should reap benefits associated with the better development of lower-level employees, as well as the talent of the line managers.

6.3.2 Implications for professional practice

A further examination of the relevant literature was conducted to consider previous researchers' arguments and suggestions regarding resources and interventions that are directly applicable to the findings from this particular study. Bakker et al (2011) argued that for organisations interested in how to develop engagement with line managers, it will be useful to classify engagement interventions in terms of organisational-, job-, and individual-level interventions. Therefore, these proposals are organised below in accordance with Bakker et al's suggested classifications:

6.3.2.1 Organisational level

Overall, organisation factors need to be coordinated and consistent for the most favourable impact on organisation effectiveness through line manager attitudes and behaviour (Ferris et al, 1998). In this particular study the organisation factor was a function of four items: organisational culture, leadership direction, value articulation, and goal orientation.

Organisational culture

Key aspects are:

- Gaining line manager commitment to HRM necessitates strong organisational values that emphasise HRM (Hutchinson & Purcell, 2003).
- Organisational practices that effectively convey the values of the organisation to all line managers, and involve them with the goals of the organisation, are likely to result in more engaged line managers, and ultimately in more positive behaviours at work.
- The more line managers internalise and identify the values and goals of the organisation they work in, the more likely they will feel engaged at work (Bindl & Parker (2010).
- Creating relationship-based working environments that focus on making connections, enabling trust, and fostering cooperation with employees, which may reduce the need for developmental interventions by line managers (Ellinger et al, 2011).

Leadership direction

Organisational commitment to line manager engagement in subordinate employee development activities requires senior leadership endorsement that is ideally realized by acknowledging such engagement as a core value. Honey & Mumford (1996) and Simonsen (1997) suggested several key activities which leaders need to undertake in order to develop a supportive learning climate within an organisation:

- System building – building learning into the system so that it is integrated with normal work processes and firmly on the conscious agenda.
- Acting as learning champions – championing the importance of learning for other parts of the organisation and the organisation as a whole.
- Providing leadership for development culture change.
- Communicating the urgency for everyone to be involved in the Employee Development process.
- Promoting the program purposes and need for changes.
- Expressing high level expectations.
- Continued encouragement for participation.
- Showing role modelling behaviours – explicitly demonstrating in behaviour and actions an enthusiasm for personal learning and development.
- Providing learning opportunities – consciously providing learning/development opportunities for other people and being an active supporter/encourager whenever those opportunities are taken up.

Regarding role modelling, Simonsen (1997) suggested that if line managers are expected to have career development discussions and work on development plans with subordinates, there should be similar expectations regarding senior managers and their direct reports. If senior managers aren't willing to take the time or emphasise the importance of development, that message cascades throughout the organisation.

Value articulation

Meyers & van Woerkom (2014) argued that in order to make sure that Employee Development is implemented as designed, senior managers have to clearly communicate and explain their organisations' talent philosophy to line managers. Meyers & van Woerkom (2014) further suggested that, if necessary, organisations

might also have to put considerable effort into persuading the line managers of the value of pursuing a certain philosophy, especially if the line manager holds a different view. Additionally, Dalziel & Strange (2007) argued that it is important that engaging line managers with Employee Development initiatives is recognised by line managers as part of a whole organisational culture change, being supported by and driven from the top for business reasons.

Therefore, more attention needs to be given to achieving buy-in – communicating the “right” messages is not sufficient in itself as there needs to be some process for ensuring the messages are understood and the strategies are supported by line managers. Maxwell & Watson (2006) highlighted three types of line manager buy-in: conceptual understanding of the rationale for their involvement; implementation effectiveness through role clarity and capability; and affective commitment in believing in the value of their involvement.

Goal orientation

Regarding goal orientation, Wallo et al (2013) highlighted the importance of an organisation balancing the logic of development with the logic of performance to achieve an environment that truly facilitates developmental learning. Such a balancing act does not occur spontaneously, but requires leaders to create opportunities, spaces, and support for increased developmental learning at work.

6.3.2.2 Job level (related to A-M-O factors)

Motivation factor

In this particular study the motivation factor can be regarded as a function of nine items - performance incentives, accountability, return on investment, social exchange, intrinsic motivation, need for autonomy, need for purpose, need for relatedness, and desire for competence.

Accountability

Accountability needs to be built into the system – if Employee Development is linked with performance management or is an integral part of a comprehensive selection, development, and reward system, line managers will take it seriously. Line managers not held accountable for developing employees will revert to prioritising that for which they are rewarded (Simonsen, 1997). Organisations should find ways to make line managers unambiguously responsible for

developing the skills and knowledge of their employees – by including Employee Development as an explicit objective in annual evaluations (Guthridge et al, 2006).

Performance incentives

While discussing the impact of organisational structure and practices on workplace learning, Ashton (2004) mentioned two types of rewards. First are immediate, short-term intrinsic rewards such as recognition from a superior. Second are the long-term rewards that took the form of suggestions that supporting learning that results in more effective performance should be rewarded through promotion, personal improvement in the internal ranking process used by the company, or improvement in salary. Schuck (1985) argued that the intrinsic reward of supporting development and creating meaning for workers can be reward in itself, although it would be naïve to assume that such intrinsic rewards are enough.

Hall (2006) reported that developing an incentive system that creates alignment between desired performance and the reward that line managers value is essential in achieving desired performance results. According to Meyer et al (2010) when rewards and recognition are given to convey line manager competence, and not to control line manager behaviour, they can increase autonomous motivation. In other words, rewards that inform the line manager about performance level are likely to increase autonomous motivation, while reward systems that require close behaviour monitoring are likely to increase controlled motivation. Incentives that motivate line managers include making compensation fair and competitive, building trust, making job assignments more complete and challenging, eliminating fear in the workplace, empowering line managers, and avoiding micromanaging.

Social exchange

Shannock & Eisenberger (2006) found that that line managers who feel supported by the organisation reciprocate with more supportive treatment for subordinate employees, therefore organisations may wish to cultivate line manager perceptions of organisational support (POS). Setting expectations, explaining the purpose of work to line managers, and providing performance feedback increases line manager perceptions of competence which translates into higher levels of

engagement and helping behaviours at work. Also, senior managers should create interaction opportunities and show personal concern for line manager needs.

De Jong et al (1999) suggested facilitating line managers in their HRD tasks in line with the three distinct HRD roles that their study observed:

- Supportive role: just as line managers should be expected to show interest in their subordinates' developmental activities on a daily basis, line managers themselves should experience a continuous interest and support by their superiors in their attempts to improve their skills.
- Coach role: Just as line managers should provide training and coaching to their subordinates, they themselves should receive instruction and guidance in order to develop in their management role.
- Analytic role: just as line managers should be expected to discuss periodically the performance and the developmental needs of their subordinates, line managers themselves should be periodically screened with respect to their performance and their developmental needs, both in the way of production and in the way of people management.

Need for purpose

Carter (2013) contended that an opportunity to improve and sustain line manager practices, and the experiences of learners, lies in the organisation's ability to demonstrate a more concrete acknowledgement of the line manager's actual role - a stronger recognition and acknowledgement by the organisation of the line manager's overall role and objectives in facilitating worker learning would positively contribute to building line manager confidence in developing and deploying strategies, and in applying skills which are most needed to meet diverse worker learning needs. Improving all line managers' understanding of the organisational basis of their involvement in Employee Development may also bolster their performance in these activities (Watson et al, 2007).

Other needs satisfaction

According to van den Broeck et al (2010) needs satisfaction might be a point of interest for organisations – possibly leading to line managers' enhanced engagement. By taking a line managers' perspective, organisations should be more able to understand the specific elements that are needed in a particular situation to facilitate the desired work outcomes (Baard et al, 2001).

Organisations that treat line managers in ways that afford them voice and autonomy may contribute substantially to line managers' engagement. Kuvaas et al (2014) argued that line managers who are provided with the necessary discretion and autonomy to take individual and local needs into account when implementing HR may view this as a symbol of trust in their competence and willingness to work for organisational goals and, therefore, as organisational support or an organisational inducement. Autonomy support would also be expected to facilitate experienced satisfaction of the needs for competence and relatedness (Deci et al, 2001). Deci et al (2001) contended that autonomy support requires organisations understanding and acknowledging their line managers' perspectives, providing meaningful information in an informational manner, offering opportunities for choice, and encouraging self-initiation.

Intrinsic motivation

Morrison et al (2007) suggested that organisations must examine sources of intrinsic motivation, provide a culture that encourages line managers to find meaning in their work, and develop methods that sustain this approach.

Opportunity factor

In this particular study the opportunity factor can be regarded can be regarded as a function of nine sub-items (guidance, effectiveness of HRD practices, relationship with HRD practitioners, role clarity, role conflict), work responsibilities, turnover frequency, workload, and competing demands) that are combined into three composite items – role dissonance and ambiguity, how work is organised, and organisational support.

Role dissonance and ambiguity

Martins (2007) contended that it seems logical to suggest that defining the line manager's role should be part of the strategy to enhance performance. Line managers who are provided with a clear role definition (McConville, 2006) and clear expectations about their role, and thus know what their responsibilities are (Lowe, 1992), will be more effective in implementing Employee Development provided they have been adequately trained (Renwick, 2003).

How work is organised

Reducing the workloads and short-term job pressures of line managers, together with capitalising on the good relations with HRD specialists are means to develop greater engagement.

- Carter (2013) suggested the need for developing and maintaining a culture of supported collaboration among workers so as to distribute some of the line manager's workload to other capable team members.
- Bakker et al (2011) argued that organisations can take some measures to ensure that line managers are aware of the tasks/activities on which they should focus their attention. According to Demerouti (2006), possible measures are to set clear performance targets and to indicate clearly what are line managers' primary and secondary tasks. In this way, line managers will be aware of what is important for the organisation and their own performance. Such approaches can be used in combination with transformational leadership to make the experience of work engagement beneficial for all line managers.
- Bakker et al (2011) findings implied that organisations can profit by stimulating work engagement among their employees by creating engagement-evoking working environments through work (re)design approaches.
- Tims et al (2013) suggested that organisations should not only facilitate manager well-being by providing sufficient job resources and optimal level of job demands, but they should also offer opportunities for job crafting. This could enhance line manager sense of control, job satisfaction, work engagement, and ultimately job performance. Tims et al (2013) argued that organisations could inform their line managers about job crafting strategies and stimulate line managers to take initiative when they desire more challenging work or less hindering job demands.

Organisational support

It is critical that line managers receive the development and support that is necessary to manage and support change (Beer & Eisenstat, 2000). Simonsen (1997) suggested that the line manager's role is made easier if there are established resources for them to use in dealing with development needs. For example, there may be differences in perception regarding competencies or about viability of goals - line managers may need skills and job aids to handle these potential

problem situations. Setting development standards may be important also. As Pollock (1999) commented, “let’s face it, if you can approach a line manager with a clear description of an activity at which his or her staff must be competent, if you can demonstrate that some development is required to bring people to an acceptable level of competence, and if you can demonstrate that your staff have achieved that level of competence the line manager will probably be convinced of the value of the proposed development”.

Purcell & Hutchinson (2007) suggested that there is a form of symbiotic relationship between line managers and HR practices. HR practices, to be successfully applied, need effective line manager activity. Line managers to be effective in people management need HR policies to work with and apply. Kuvaas et al (2014) argued that when selecting and designing HR practices, organisations should acknowledge the need to interact with line managers particularly in respect to ensuring local and individual adaptability and making sure that line managers perceive HR practices as assisting them in performing their managerial responsibilities. Purcell & Hutchinson (2007) recommended that the design of HR practices should include consideration of how line managers can apply them. Line managers have a major role in bringing them to life and the practices need to be as user-friendly as possible.

Ability factor

The data derived from this particular study indicated that it is important for training needs to move beyond learning how to apply HR practices, and direct efforts towards increasing line managers’ competence in required soft skills for them to successfully support employees’ development. Simonsen (1997) suggested that line managers’ need to be introduced to new models of Employee Development to help employees grow in new ways – because the ladder has fewer rungs or perhaps because there is no ladder – line managers need new concepts and models on which to build their coaching and feedback. They need to be energised so they can enthusiastically embrace the new possibilities rather than bemoan the fact that the old paths are gone. Jackson & Lindsay (2010) referred to line managers being so focused on execution and short-term success that they too heavily rely on compliance-based and transactional leadership styles. They don’t recognise or don’t know how to apply other approaches to get the best, over time, from their current personnel. Jackson & Lindsay (2010) suggested that this

knowledge can be implanted by orienting line managers to leadership models related to transformational leadership, ideas about how to elicit motivation from subordinates, about the effect of leader-member exchange and the organisational impact of the quality of the line manager relationships, and about organisational citizenship behaviours and the contributions these “extra role” behaviours have on leadership and organisational effectiveness.

McCarthy & Milner (2013) found that the importance of a supportive coaching culture should not be underestimated, as this facilitates the transition from training in skills to a daily application of these skills by line managers. Because coaching training does have an effect on the exhibition of coaching behaviours (Graham et al, 1994), it is apparent that training managers to behave in this way will improve coaching exhibition and thus the outcomes that result. Ladyshevsky (2010) also argued that the training experience must go beyond teaching basic coaching skills. Factors such as emotional intelligence, building trust and understanding the role of values and how these inspire and motivate staff need to be addressed in these training initiatives.

In a similar vein, Ellinger et al (2011) recommended increasing line managers’ self-awareness - so that they are able to assess when managerial coaching interventions may or may not be productive - should be a part of programs that are focused on developing managerial coaching skills. Ellinger & Bostrom (1999) suggested that such programs will need to provide a safe and supportive practice environment for line managers - for them to learn to “unfreeze” or let go of old behaviours associated with the “command and control” paradigm.

McCarthy & Ahrens (2011) advocated that organisations should have a strategy to ensure that line managers will have the confidence and support to apply the trained skills when they return to work. Such strategies may include providing work-based learning opportunities and line managers themselves being coached or mentored. Ladyshevsky (2010) also recommended that any training or organisational development strategy should also take into account the personal perspectives of line managers with regard to their role in supporting Employee Development.

6.3.2.3 Individual level

Bakker et al (2011) suggested that in terms of individual level intervention, programmes aimed at increasing line manager engagement could focus on building personal resources such as psychological capital (e.g., efficacy beliefs, optimism, hope, and resiliency) for line managers. Training, coaching, and developmental supports may aim, for example, at building positive affect, emotional intelligence, and positive adaptive behavioural strategies (Albrecht, 2010). Rafferty & Griffin (2006) proposed that organisations can train their line managers in a number of specific behaviours that are associated with developmental leadership and which can also become a part of selection packages when identifying new line managers.

Crabb (2011) identified a series of individual level drivers that contribute to an engaged state. The three individual drivers are Focusing Strengths, Managing Emotions and Aligning Purpose. Crabb (2011) proposed that organisations can assist line managers to understand their strengths, emotions and values, and how these fit with their role in the organisation. These objective measures can be integrated into a series of coaching dialogues that explore how the line manager can shape their role to further utilise their strengths, become more resilient, and find meaning in what they do. In doing so, the line manager can utilise the individual level drivers of engagement which, when combined with the organisation level drivers, could result in tangible and intangible benefits to both the line manager and the organisation.

6.3.2.4 Other interventions

McGuire et al (2008) advocated that organisations should recruit line managers for whom capability values represent a relatively salient personal value type. Line managers who place strong emphasis on achievement, self-reliance, competence and self-respect are more likely to champion training and development in the workplace. Bos-Nehles (2010) argued that organisations should first select line managers who are willing to implement HR practices, then organisations should increase their HR related competencies and support them well. McGuire et al (2008) suggested that organisations need to be aware of the affective function of values and seek greater alignment of the personal values systems of line managers through recruitment and socialization processes. Where organisations place a high emphasis on training and development, the results suggest that organisations

should recruit line managers for whom capability values represent a relatively salient personal value type.

Finally, Simonsen (1997) suggested that line managers who don't want to or don't have the skills to develop employees should be guided to individual contributor paths instead of into line manager roles.

6.4 Limitations of this study and suggestions for future research

As with all studies, this particular study had certain limitations related to choices made about approach and methods.

A first limitation relates to the generalisability of the case study, which was limited to one company. Because of the overall impact of organisation factors, analyses of different organisations may show different results. Further studies using different organisations are necessary to determine the robustness of the results.

Secondly, the sample size was probably too small to discern reliable differences between some of the groups. This was especially apparent when comparing line managers from different geographies, so differences could not be properly tested for significance because the sample was too small. In addition, when comparing line managers with differing experiences and with different ages, some of the groupings had to be combined and consolidated to have comparable populations. This could mean some of the differences are not indicative. Studies using larger samples are therefore needed.

Thirdly, the self-reported data collected from line managers made this study vulnerable to mono-method bias and percept-percept inflated measures. Self-reported data tend to inflate the relationship between the independent and dependent variable, which results in an independent variable that artificially explains more of the variance in the dependent variable than when the independent and dependent variable are collected from different sources. However, Bozionelos et al (2014) argued that the bias from self-reported data may be overstated. Additionally, Xanthopoulou et al (2007) contended that such constructs as work engagement are nearly impossible to measure in any other way than by self-reports. Such method effects might be avoided in future research by using objective rather than subjective assessments of factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of employees' development.

Fourthly, the study used cross-sectional data collected at one point in time, making it impossible to draw inferences of causality or rule out the possibility of reverse causality. Future research could incorporate longitudinal design or experimental

studies to establish the linkages among the variables and understand how they change over time.

Fifth, the questions in the survey to assess the importance of factors influencing line managers' engagement in support of employees' development were developed for this study specifically. Future studies should therefore examine whether the reliability and validity of this scale can be increased.

Sixth, the research has only been able to determine line managers' development stance, whereas it would be valuable to ascertain actual supporting development actions of the line managers.

Seventh, Warhurst (2013) concluded that line managers had a limited understanding of learning processes and of non-formal learning methods that the default position of many line managers is to associate learning with formal interventions such as training courses. In the context of the current study this may mean that many line managers declared their stance towards support of employees' training efforts rather than their stance towards active support of employees' overall workplace learning needs.

Eighth, there may be limitations in the components of the questionnaire, as the measures used in this study were originally developed in a Western context. These items may not be sufficiently sensitive to take account of culturally sensitivities and therefore, this may limit the generalisability of the study in other countries.

Ninth, because participation in the study was voluntary, bias associated with this sample selection method may be present. If motivation to respond to this survey was involved with an issue that the participants cared about, they might give information that only supports their beliefs. Also, non-response bias may have occurred if respondents differed from non-respondents.

Tenth, the study did not include measures of variables relating to individual factors, such as line managers' traits or personal values. It is arguable that these variables may be more critical in explaining line managers' engagement in support of employees' development.

Eleventh, the hypothesised model for the current study might be under-specified or not completely exhaustive regarding the factors influencing line managers'

engagement in support of employees' development. Other potential factors need to be explored in future studies.

Finally, the organising framework used in this study makes no assumptions about how to prioritise scarce resources for interventions related to organisation, ability, motivation, or opportunity variables. As referenced in Chapter 2.15, managerial interventions aimed at factors that are not constraining in the organisation are less likely to be effective. Also, the nature of investments to be made will vary widely depending on which variable or combination of variables constitutes the bottleneck that needs to be addressed. Further research using models such as Siemsen et al's (2008) Constraining Factors Model may provide insights into how operations managers can focus on bottleneck variables.

Despite these limitations, mentioned above, the design of the evaluation and data collection approaches were able to mitigate the impacts. Strategies were taken to ensure the evaluation presented valuable, reliable information to support strong findings as set out above in Section 6.2 of this chapter. These limitations also provide a basis for future research.